

# ROUND ROBIN

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Abbie Farwell Brown





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# ROUND ROBIN

OTHER VOLUMES IN THE  
“LITTLE  
SCHOOLMATES” SERIES

*Edited by*

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IN SUNNY SPAIN.....*Katharine Lee Bates*

UNDER GREEK SKIES

*Julia D. Dragoumis*

A BOY IN EIRINN.....*Padraic Colum*

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of Italy.....*Nannine La Villa Meiklejohn*

ARCHAG THE LITTLE ARMENIAN

Translated from the French of

*Charles H. Schnapps*





it seemed empty

M. G. Wells

# ROUND ROBIN

BY

ABBIE FARWELL BROWN

"



*America! America!*

*God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!*

—KATHARINE LEE BATES

NEW YORK  
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY  
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TO

*Katharine Lee Bates*

SEER OF TRUTH, SAYER OF BEAUTY,

SOWER OF WISDOM

*God hath made of one blood all nations  
of men to dwell on the face of the earth.*

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## A LETTER TO THE ONE WHO READS THIS BOOK

DEAR SCHOOLMATE:

This is a stay-at-home story, the only one in our series. We have been to Greece and Spain, to Russia, Germany, and France, to Belgium, to Japan, to Ireland and Mexico, to Armenia and Scotland and Italy. We played with the royal children in the palace of the Tsar, before their great tragedy touched them; we went to school in Paris with Geneviève, and in Aintab with Archag, and out to domestic service with Mattina in Athens; we sang Spanish riddles with Pilarica, and listened to Scottish hero-tales with the young Laird; we lived in a Mexican cave and sailed in a Japanese boat; we spent Christmas in Germany, before the War; we tramped the roads of Ireland with gay Finn, before the revolution; we followed Pieter when he fought for his Belgium; and we came home

from the Italian victory in a little Sicilian cart of many colors. And now we are going to stay at home and live as Americans live, and get acquainted with ourselves and each other.

America is a palace of a thousand windows, some of them opening on the past and some of them looking toward the future; and in my letters to you I have tried to open a few of the windows that look back into our pasts; magic casements they are, for we have as many pasts as we have races in America. And two things I have tried to tell you about those races:

Why they came to America  
and  
What they brought to America.

Turn over the pages of the letters, if you have kept them, and you will find that they are really chapters in a short history of America's colonists and immigrants. All the chapters are not written yet, all the windows are not opened; some day perhaps there will

be a Scandinavian chapter to tell us why the hardy, industrious Norse and Swedes are here, farming our northwestern prairies, and what gifts they brought to make America more beautiful; and some day we may open a Dutch window, looking across the perilous sea from old New York to Holland.

But this time, my letter is not a little chapter of past history, for most of the young people in this story are descendants of the Puritans who settled New England and the Cavaliers who settled Virginia; and we already know by heart those two chapters of our past. Don't we? Plymouth Rock, Paul Revere, Pocahontas:

*"A cargo of tea  
Thrown into the sea,  
In seventeen-hundred  
And sixty-three."*

Those are the keys which unlock that magic casement. You can open it for yourself, any time. The "Round Robin" window which I am opening in this letter, looks not into the

past nor yet into the future, but into the present. It looks right into the hearts of American boys and girls of to-day.

From the East and the West and the North and the South of our United States they come. Two or three, in the story, have fathers who were foreign born, but most of them are of "American Stock," as we say when we mean that our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers were the children of English colonists. We say it proudly, we whose ancestors fought the American Revolution, whose grandfathers saw the passing of slavery, whose brothers did their bit in the Great War. Proudly, because we believe that whatsoever of freedom, of democracy, of holiness there is in America to-day, was first planted and rooted here by our ancestors, those first English settlers.

Narrow-minded and narrow-hearted people who look with near-sighted spirits through the windows of the past and the windows of the future, bewail the fact that one hundred years from now, "American Stock" will no longer mean to American Schoolchildren,

English inheritance. Because, dear Schoolmate, your children and your grandchildren will have married and intermarried with Americans of Latin and Teutonic and Slavic and other blood—with the American grandchildren of Italians, and French, and Germans, and Swedes, and Russians, and Syrians—and who knows how many other races? But these narrow-minded, narrow-hearted, unvisionary people forget that if our America is a free, a democratic, a holy place, one hundred years from now, the American Stock will still be rooted true in the old ideals. And it is by ideals that countries live and are judged.

To Americanize a person means to find out how much, or how little, he knows and cares about freedom and democracy and holiness, and then to help that much or little grow. And all this is done by making friends with the foreigners who come to us from other lands. Making friends with people, as you know very well, means understanding them, loving them, making allowance for them and remembering that they have to make allow-

ance for us also. It means studying their ways, and especially their ways of achieving freedom, their ways of achieving democracy, their ways of achieving holiness—as well as expecting them to study and approve of our ways. Perhaps some of their ways are better than some of ours. If they are, then we shall certainly want to adopt those ways; if they are not, then we must do our American best to convince these immigrant friends that our ways are better. We mustn't think that a way is bad just because it isn't our way, and we mustn't think a way is good just because it is our way.

So you see that Americanizing people means much more than teaching them English, and telling them about George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, and showing them how to use bathtubs and ballot boxes. It means making sure that they know what freedom means, and what democracy means (Do you know, dear Schoolmate?) and what holiness means; and that their hearts and souls are set toward making America a free, a democratic, a holy nation.

Look into the hearts of the children in this Round Robin, and you will find growing there the old ideals whose names I am repeating so often in this letter, freedom, democracy, holiness; you will find them in the hearts of the young Americans whose fathers were foreign born (I'll wait and let Miss Abbie Farwell Brown tell you which those are), as well as in Beverly's courteous little Southern heart, and Nancy's staunch little New England heart, and Dick's jolly little wholesome heart of the West. The children in the story would be astonished if they knew that I was saying these things about them. They are just "a bunch" of honest, happy boys and girls, off on a typical American holiday in a summer camp, learning to "get together." But getting together is the A B C of freedom and democracy and holiness.

It is the A B C of holiness because holiness is "getting together" with God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And getting together with God means finding out God's will and then doing it; working with

Him; building up the nation with Him. And the way to get together with God is by prayer; and by looking back through the ages and following the working of His will in His world, as we see it in the Bible, and in all secular science, art, history, and literature; and then by more prayer. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, *on earth*, as it is in heaven." That is the prayer of the nation builder, who has "got together" with God. And every American is a nation builder.

It is the A B C of democracy because democracy is "getting together" with your fellow-men: "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Fellowship, brotherhood, equal opportunity, all these come from loving thy neighbor as thyself. Government of the people, by the people, for the people, must fail just so long as we fail to love our neighbor as ourself. Democracy means loving all the people all the time; not just one kind of people, the rich, or the poor, or the bankers, or the bakers, or the people who live in our street, but *all* the people, *all* the time. In a Democracy, every man is our neighbor.

It is the A B C of freedom, because freedom is "getting together" with the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." You can't be free by yourself; not in America; not in the world. Even if you were a self-supporting hermit, or a Robinson Crusoe, you wouldn't be free. Solitude isn't freedom. You wouldn't be free to marry, alone on a desert island. A man is free when he is at peace with himself. But no man is really at peace with himself so long as some other man is not at peace. God made us so. Even if we are self-righteous and think that we are not to blame for our neighbor's unhappiness, we can't be at peace while he is miserable before our eyes and in our ears; but to have to run away from misery isn't freedom. What does this mean, dear Schoolmate? Why! it means that you and I can never be free until everyone is free. It means that freedom is a spiritual goal; but you don't have to beat the other fellow to it; the game is to have everybody come up to time. And to have everybody come up to time, we must all play

the game according to the rule; be good sports!

And now, you will tell me that these ideals are not merely American, they are the ideals for which every Christian nation ought to strive. That may be; but America has a special claim to them, for it was our English colonial ancestors who put them into political form for us, and breathed their spirit into this government of ours which we called a Republic. We think that freedom, democracy, and holiness have a better chance to grow in our Republic than in the earlier forms of government, such as monarchy. Republics, such as ours, may not be the last word in political freedom, and democracy, and holiness; there may be newer forms of government in which people may have a better chance to be holy, democratic, and free than they have in ours; all history shows how men and governments have grown and changed, down the ages; to grow is to change. But so long as we do think that our ideals have a better chance in a Republic than in anything else, we can keep our government a Republic; for it is we who

choose what America shall be; it is we who cast the votes. That is what it means to be an American.

And because freedom and holiness and democracy are the ideals for which every Christian nation ought to strive—and this the nations know, in their secret hearts, as well as you and I know it, dear Schoolmate—because their ideals and ours are really the same, we have, in those ideals, the basis and groundwork, and starting point for an international brotherhood of nations; the one sure way of getting together.

Affectionately yours,  
FLORENCE CONVERSE.



# **ROUND ROBIN**



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## CHAPTER I

### THE GOLDEN GIRL

SIX girls and a terrier puppy were waiting on the wharf at Old Harbor for the boat to come in. Of course there were many other persons gathered besides these; for the arrival of the daily mail boat was the great event of the little Maine seaport. But the six girls in their brown middies, flitting about like gay thrushes, seemed to take up most of the room on the little pier; to say nothing of the omnipresent pup.

Although they were dressed almost exactly alike, and were of nearly the same age, they were as different as six girls could well be.

One was tall and quiet, with a straight thick mane of fair hair. One was short, dark and round, and spoke with a quaint accent. One had a rich olive skin, great serious brown eyes, and a black braid thick as your arm. One was freckled like a meadow lily, with a snub nose and sandy curls. The fifth was a slender, dainty brunette with tiny hands and feet and a delightful Southern drawl. The last of the six had features like the tall, quiet girl. But she was sturdier and quicker. There was a ripple in her chestnut hair and a twinkle in her blue eyes that marked this Yankee from her English cousin.

These two, arm in arm, were leaning over the railing of the pier, exchanging jokes with a big red-haired boy in a dory below, who was doing mysterious things with a landing net.

"Ho! There, you've lost another one, Dick!" cried the lively girl of the watching pair. "A great cowboy you are, and can't catch a crab!"

"I'll bet I could do it with a lasso, Nancy," grinned the boy good-naturedly, "though the

critters do have nex' to no necks." Dick Reed was always making atrocious puns like this one, which the girls pretended not to notice. "I figured I'd get a nice mess for all our suppers. But—" he glanced ruefully at the two small red objects sidling about the bottom of the dory, "I reckon I'll have to make it a private donation to the newest comer; a sort of peace-offering. Say, do you suppose she will like 'em?"

"Why shouldn't she like them?" asked Cicely Vane, the English girl, in her clear soft tones.

"Yes? Why shouldn't she like them?" Nancy Batchelder repeated her cousin's question in her more animated and penetrating voice. "I suppose she eats like the rest of us."

"Well, we'll soon see," said Dick, landing another crab dexterously. "There you are, old Sidestepper! And proud you ought to be to make a lunch for the Golden Girl."

"Hush, Dick!" cautioned Nancy, "Don't let any stranger hear you call her that. It sounds so—so vulgar. You'll forget sometime, and she will hear you."

"She's got good ears if she can hear me now," muttered Dick.

"We used to call her that last summer," Nancy whispered to her chum. "You know, she has lived here longer than any of us, really. But I don't believe she knows the nice, dear corners of Old Harbor, or the nice, dear comfortable people as well as we do. She never went anywhere off her father's place, they say, except to ride or drive or sail in his yacht. Though when she was a tiny little girl she used to run down to Cap'n Sackett's often. That was before Nelly went there to live."

"Didn't she come to see you at the camp?" queried Cicely, wondering at the inconsistent ways of these Americans, in a land where everyone was supposed to be "equal." "I should have thought she would be lonesome in that big house."

"Dear me, no!" laughed Nancy. "She never even looked at us in those days. You ought to have seen her nose go up in the air when she passed us in the motor. She had girls and boys on house parties to visit her

sometimes. But they came from far away, and flocked by themselves. Mrs. Poole, her stepmother, is a dressy, snobby kind of woman. I'm glad my mother isn't like that! The people here scarcely know her by sight. Nobody likes Mr. Poole, either. He is what they call a 'hard man,' whatever that may mean."

"In England it has something to do with money and not being kind," said Cicely vaguely. "I don't think I shall like this rich girl of yours, Nancy."

"Don't call her *mine!*!" Nancy hastened to disclaim, with a little shake to her cousin's shoulders. "I didn't want her to come. Nobody did. But as Mother said, what could you do, when Mr. Poole wrote so strangely, to say that he and Mrs. Poole were going suddenly away with the baby, and that there would be no other place for them to leave Anne? Just imagine! He said Anne had always spent her summers at Old Harbor; and now mightn't she stay at Mother's camp with us girls, to learn the simple life, which would be good for her!"

"My word!" commented Cicely. "How odd! Was that all her father said?"

"I think so. Anyway, you know Mother. After she had read that letter backward and forward—and upside down, for all I know—she sighed and said—'Poor little Golden Girl! I don't understand her father. But I guess we ought to have her here and be nice to her.' "

"Dear Tante!" exclaimed Cicely. "She couldn't help but be nice to anyone. But why did she call this Anne a 'poor' little girl?"

"I don't know," said Nancy. "I wonder." Their wonderings were cut short by a cry from the other side of the pier. "Boat ahoy! Hi, Nancy!"

It was a tall young man in a flannel shirt and knickerbockers who called out to his sister over the heads of the crowd.

"Come on, girls!" summoned Nancy, who seemed to be their leader. And the little brown flock fluttered forward to the edge of the pier. "Now, when I say 'One—two—three!' be ready with the yell. We'll start her right with a rousing welcome, anyway."

The little steamer was just rounding the point of the nearest island. Evidently there were not many persons on board. It was still early in the season and many of the summer cottages were as yet unopened. On the upper deck was standing just one person. As the boat drew near one could see that this was a girl in a fur stole, who seemed to be looking earnestly at the group on the wharf.

"That must be Anne Poole," said Nancy to her Club. And she whispered in Cicely's ear—"I'm nervous! I don't know why. She seems to me like a foreigner, though she's not. But you didn't, and you are!"

The sentence sounded mixed. But Cicely seemed to understand and squeezed her cousin's arm. These two were old friends as well as relatives. For though this was Cicely Vane's first visit to America, Nancy Batchelder had several times been to Cicely's home in England, the country of Nancy's own long-ago ancestors.

"*Q'elle est chic!*" murmured Gilda Bé-temps.

"But how pale!" added Norma, the dark girl.

"I wish Mother would let me bob my hair," thought Nancy, looking enviously at the newcomer's boyish head.

"What lovely clothes!" sighed the pretty Southerner, noting every detail of hat and coat and dainty shoes. "I can't imagine her in this rig!"

"She looks stiff and unhappy," thought the English girl. What Nelly Sackett thought she did not say. Her lips were pursed together and she eyed the Golden Girl with keen blue eyes.

"Now, come on, girls! Go to it, Doughboy!" Nancy admonished the puppy. "One two—*three!*" Six girlish voices, aided by a deeper masculine trio, burst into a wild yell. "Heia, hoia! Together! Get together!"

"*Bow-wow-wow!*" barked Doughboy, quivering with enthusiasm.

The girl on the steamer looked first surprised then interested, as she saw six handkerchiefs waved in her direction, while a little dog bounded frantically up and down like a

rubber ball. She had not expected a welcome like this. Though indeed she had not known what to expect, it was all so strange. A little color crept into her pale cheeks and she bowed her head slightly.

"Some airs!" sniffed Dick Reed. Then he disappeared into the background, where Hugh and Victor were getting the motor boat ready for passengers.

The little steamer picked her way gingerly to the pier. The gang plank was let down, and presently the Golden Girl was tripping ashore on high-heeled shoes. Nancy stepped forward with a well-meaning smile. "You are Miss Anne Poole?" she said, "And I am Nancy Batchelder from Round Robin. I'm glad to welcome you. My mother was sorry not to be here, too. But she is busy getting luncheon ready." Anne Poole stared. Her hostess was busy, getting her own luncheon! What a funny place! Then she glanced around with a start; for already the gang plank was hauled in and the steamer was about to move away. "Oh, my bags!" she cried. "Didn't anyone bring them ashore?"

"Three trunks have come off," volunteered Nancy, as who should say,—"Isn't that enough for anybody?"

"No, bags; two handbags besides. One has my jewelry in it. I left them on the seat. I thought someone would bring them." Anne Poole stood helpless.

The steamer's bell rang. "Oh, Captain! Wait a minute! She's left her bags!" Nancy called. Like a flash she jumped onto the steamer, over the railing, ran to the upper deck and soon reappeared with a big and a little bag, which the other girls helped her to hand ashore. Then once more she stood on the pier beside the astonished Anne, before either she or the Captain had recovered breath, or the steamer had got under way.

"We have to help ourselves and move quickly, or we get left, you see," said Nancy, laughing at the girl's amazed expression.

"I supposed there would be porters," Anne repeated stiffly. "I never lift bags. But then, I never came to Old Harbor on the steamer before. Father always brought us down on the yacht."

"It's quite different when you come by steamer. You'll find a lot of things different, I guess," grinned Nancy rather wickedly.

"I suppose so," remarked Anne, lifting her eyebrows with a bored expression.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROUND ROBIN CLUB

PEOPLE were already drifting away from the pier. "Hugh and Victor are waiting to take us to Camp in the motor boat," explained Nancy. "I'll just introduce you to the Round Robin before we start. Don't you think we have a nice yell? There are six of us, you see; you will make the seventh girl. The boys are Associates. Mother and the Twins are Honorary."

Nancy chattered so fast that the newcomer was quite bewildered. Perhaps it was the best way to get over an awkward moment, for the Club was oddly tongue-tied. They did not all know one another very well as yet, the summer being so young. They were not awed by the Golden Girl; but they did not like the way she looked at them. "How queer these people are." She seemed to be thinking. "I

knew they would be." She said nothing, however, and perhaps they mistook her real thoughts.

Nancy began her introduction, putting her arm about Cicely's shoulders. "This is my cousin Cicely Vane of England," she said.

"How do you do?" said Cicely prettily. Anne nodded coldly as the name of each girl was given.

"This is Gilda Bétemp, who was born in Belgium," went on Nancy, drawing forward the short, round girl whose pleasant face was beaming. "She doesn't speak English very easily yet. But she is getting on. She is going to be an American all the rest of her life."

"I gave some money for the Belgian children, and a lot of old clothes," said Anne, staring at Gilda with some interest. "What a dreadful thing to say!" inwardly commented the other girls. But Gilda only smiled.

"And this," Nancy indicated the brunette of the group, "is Norma Sonnino, who is going to be a great musician some day, like her grandfather. She sings like a—like a round robin!"

Norma blushed and rolled her eyes. "Nancy is always laughing at me," she said, showing dazzling white teeth. "Like a round robin indeed!"

"Well, I don't know anybody who can sing better than the round robin we named our camp for; the fellow who sings on top of the spruce tree every morning—*'Get up, get up! Get uppity up!'* And his sunset song, Norma!"

"*Grazie tante!*!" said Norma, shrugging her shoulders, but smiling too.

"Another foreigner!" thought Anne Poole. "That makes three of them already. What an odd group for *me!*!" And her little nose rose higher in the air.

Norma was not a foreigner. Her people had not lived in America so long as had the people of Nancy or Beverly or Nelly Sackett. But Norma was just as truly an American as they; since her Italian-born father was now a naturalized citizen, a merchant in New York where she herself had been born.

"I am Beverly Peyton, of Virginia," drawled the pretty Southerner, waiting for no introduction and holding out her hand

cordially. Beverly had not forgotten how cold the first greeting of these Northern girls had seemed to her warm Southern heart, when a week earlier she had arrived, a stranger to all but the Batchelders. She knew that they were not really cold; it was just the Yankee offhand way. But she wanted to cheer up this pale, big-eyed newcomer.

Anne, however, did not seem to appreciate Beverly's advance. She dropped the warm little hand as soon as convenient, and stood staring at the last of the six girls—the freckled, sandy one.

"I know you," she said. "You're Captain Sackett's niece. I used to call him 'Uncle Eph' once. Are you a member of this Club, too?" There was something in the way she said it that made Nelly Sackett flush and draw back the hand she had half extended, following Beverly's lead.

"Of course she is a member of the Round Robin," said Nancy, clapping Nelly on the shoulder in a boyish fashion. "We couldn't do without Nelly, though she doesn't live at

Camp. She lives at Cap'n Sackett's, a mile and a half away."

"The idea of a fisherman's daughter in my Club!" thought Anne Poole. "Well!" Just then a whoop rent the air and the cry—"Hurry up, girls!"

"The boys are getting impatient," Nancy explained to Anne. "They're always in a hurry. Your trunks are in the motor-boat already; three of them! I guess the boys didn't bargain for more than one. We shall be pretty crowded. But we shan't mind, if you don't."

Anne had seen two roughly-dressed young men struggling with her boxes, while a red-haired boy walked away with her suit-case. She had supposed them to be porters. What was her amazement to learn they were to be her neighbors and camp companions in this strange summer. For the bronze young man wearing the service star was Hugh Batchelder, it seemed. And his taller friend with the silver star of a wounded veteran was Victor Lanfranc, late of the French Flying Corps. While the funny Dick Reed, whom they

called "Reddy," and who shook Anne's arm up and down like a pump handle, when he was introduced, much to her disgust, was being tutored by Hugh Batchelder at his mother's camp.

Presently the *Togo* full of girls and boys and trunks and puppy, all comfortably mingled, was chugging away over the blue waters of the Harbor into a wild, beautiful section of the "country of the pointed firs." The air was pungent with the smell of balsam and bay and sweet fern, mingled with a salty fragrance that is the breath of life to true Yankees, and which even Beverly Peyton's aristocratic little Southern nose was beginning to love. Perched awkwardly on one of her own trunks, Anne Poole scanned the rocky shore eagerly, as they approached a high point.

"I suppose of course you know all about this coast?" said Nancy, trying to make conversation. "You used to sail around so much. We often saw your father's yacht last summer."

Anne sighed. "I shall miss that," she said. "Hugh has looked up all the places around

here," Nancy went on. "The Bay is full of history——"

"And fish," interrupted Dick, below his breath.

"I don't know about the history," said Anne. "But I think I do know that Point. I never came just this way before. But isn't that Idlewild?"

"Yes. That is Idlewild. And here is where Nelly gets off." They were at the entrance of a little cove, at the end of which a good-sized white house stood alone. On the shore were some low grey sheds; lobster pots lay about and a dory was moored a little way from shore. The *Togo* drew up at the tiny pier and Nelly Sackett jumped nimbly out.

"Good-bye, Nelly! Don't forget to-morrow," called Nancy.

"It's not likely I'll forget!" grinned Nelly Sackett.

"And please, ask Cap'n Sackett about the lobsters?" Nancy reminded her.

"He'll have them ready," promised Nelly. "He's going hauling, I know, to-morrow.

He'll be back by ten. The lobsters will be ready."

"Good-bye, Nelly! Good-bye!"

"Heia! Hoia! Together! Get together!" yelled the Club as the boat chugged away; the same call with which they had greeted Anne. The latter did not join in the yell. It was too strange to her.

"Here we come to Idlewild!" As the boat drew near the Point they could see a great stone house on top of a cliff; a garage, summer houses, and the glass roofs of greenhouses. But there was no flag flying on the tall flag-staff above the boat house. The place seemed deserted. Every window was shuttered, giving the house the look of a blind person. There were no boats moored off the little pier.

"How dead it looks!" thought Anne. But she said aloud complacently—"It's the finest place anywhere within fifty miles; Father says so."

"It certainly is the biggest place," agreed Nancy. "But wait till you see Round Robin!"

"I wish I was going to be here," said Anne simply; and Beverly Peyton saw her lip

tremble. "I never went anywhere else in the summer, except when we went to Europe. I liked Idlewild." Anne could not say any more.

"We will come over and see it some day, Anne," said Beverly sweetly. "It is only about a mile from Camp, they say. I've wanted to come very much."

"So have I," said Nancy. "In all the years I've never been on shore here. We'll all go, if you will invite us, Anne."

Anne did not say anything. She was watching the roofs of Idlewild fade out of sight, and she looked wistful.

The others were already planning for tomorrow and seemed to have forgotten the newcomer.

## CHAPTER III

### FAIRY RING

**A**CROSS a smooth stretch of bay dotted with tiny islets, past cliffs with great black fissures in the side; through a narrow channel between grim reefs and the ragged shore, went the *Togo*. Never a house did they pass. Never another boat did they meet. For Round Robin was hidden in an entirely wild part of the shore, too far from Old Harbor to suit most city people. The branch road ended at the Batchelders' place. Beyond was wilderness. It was this very wildness that the Batchelders and their friends liked most; and because of it they had chosen this spot for their summer camp.

“Of course you know this Bay was once a great place for Indians?” said Dick, who came from an Indian-frequented part of the country. But Anne knew nothing of Indians and

their history. "They had a village somewhere along here, Hugh says; Hugh is great on history. And out on that island away off there," Reddy pointed into the misty east, "there was a terrible massacre once."

Anne looked shocked. "There was a shipwreck on that reef," volunteered Nancy, indicating a row of brown teeth piercing through foam.

"Better than that," called out Hugh from the tiller, "did you girls know that this was the scene of a big sea-fight during the Revolution? One of my ancestors, who was master of a little fishing schooner, decoyed a British man-of-war right on to that shoal over there, and took him prisoner."

"It's not polite of you to mention it in Cicely's presence," laughed Nancy. "You might hurt her feelings."

"Dear me, no!" protested Cicely. "We have forgotten all the grudges of those days, haven't we? Our countries are just allies, aren't they?"

"Of course they are!" said Hugh saluting like a soldier.

"Sure we are!" cried Victor doing likewise.  
"Ask France, too!"

"Look, Anne!" interrupted Dick, "that island out there is where Captain Kidd is said to have hidden his treasure. Maybe we shall find it this summer, who knows?"

"Pooh! They tell that same story about every island off the coast." Nancy snubbed him.

"Well, he did hide it somewhere, didn't he?" insisted Dick. "And nobody has ever found it yet? So!"

"This is the place where Gilda fell overboard while we were fishing yesterday." Norma pointed out the place.

"Ze wasser was ve'y damp!" Gilda shrugged with a little frown. And they all began to laugh, even Anne, at the funny expression.

"And here's where we go in bathing," said Beverly, showing Anne a little sandy beach as they passed. "It is cold, oh, so cold! But it is fun, when you get used to it."

"We had a heated pool at Idlewild," said Anne dubiously. "I don't like bathing in cold sea-water."

"It's the way we take our daily baths," said Nancy. "There isn't any running water at the camp, you know. There's just the spring outside the kitchen. We have to bring in what we want in buckets, the way the first settlers did. Oh, it's quite primitive, Anne!"

"No bathrooms then? No electric lights, I suppose?" Everybody began to laugh. Dick fished something from his pocket and flashed a torch in Anne's face. "Of course we have electricity," he said. "Everybody is his own firefly."

Anne looked more and more pained at these revelations. They were approaching a point dark with fir trees, that made out into the water beside a tiny cove. There was a strip of pebbly beach, with a landing pier, from the end of which a path went wavering up the bank and disappeared into the woods. Anne caught a glimpse, through the trees, of a low log shack, and some brown canvas tents that seemed to blend in like a part of the woods.

"Here we are! Let's give the camp yell," suggested Nancy. And once again the new-

comer's ears were deafened by the strange cry, "Heia! Hoia! Together! Round Robin!"

There was a high answering call; and down the slip came hurrying a tall, sweet-faced woman in a blue dress and big apron, followed by two little capering boys. The terrier pup could not wait another minute, but leaped out of the boat and ran to greet the children, barking noisily as if trying to tell them about his wonderful trip to the Harbor to meet the Stranger.

The woman, whom everyone called "Tante," came straight to Anne and took her cordially by both hands. "Welcome to Round Robin, Anne," she said. "I am very glad to see you. These are my Twins, Eddie and Freddie. Shake hands, boys."

The Twins stared at Anne with unfeigned interest. "Yes, her hair is a sort of gold—" began Freddie. But Dick interrupted further comment on the Golden Girl by grabbing him up bodily and racing off, followed by Eddie and Doughboy in a tandem.

"I hope you will like our camp, Dear," said Mrs. Batchelder, as they followed the girls

up the path, leaving the young men to bring the luggage. "We have very happy times here together. Though you have never camped before, you will soon get used to the queerness, I am sure."

There was something so motherly and kind in her manner that a lump came in Anne's throat. She turned abruptly, in what seemed a sulky way, and said nothing.

"I t'ink s'e is not pleasant, *non*?" whispered Gilda to Norma. And the latter shrugged her shoulders. "I'm glad she is not my tent-mate," she remarked. "But Beverly can get along with her, if anyone can."

The pretty path led to a quaint cabin made of rough logs, such as the Pilgrims built in Plymouth when they first landed. There was a broad piazza, however, which those busy Pilgrims would have had no time to enjoy. On it were Gloucester hammocks, rough-finished chairs, and a table which Dick had made. "This is Round Robin," said Tante, "where we meet to eat and work and dance and spend rainy hours. A real round robin himself has a nest in the top of that spruce

tree. And the Twins and I have our nests upstairs. But I am sure you will like sleeping in a tent, Anne. The boys have pitched their tents down that path about fifty rods away, beside their favorite swimming place. That is where Dick does his studying every morning. Now, Beverly, I will turn Anne over to your Southern hospitality. You will make her feel at home as soon as possible, I know."

The other girls had already disappeared on various errands. "This way to the Fairy Ring!" drawled Beverly, with her pretty smile. "That is what Nancy calls our tent circle. They do look rather like brown mushrooms, don't they? Do you-all like mushrooms? We are beginning to find lovely ones in the woods."

"Toadstools!" Anne exclaimed in disgust. "I'm afraid of the nasty things. Of course, I like the ones we get in the city," she qualified, remembering.

"Wild ones are best," declared Beverly. "You'll learn to know the difference. But don't be fooled by the rich-looking Amanita.

It's deadly! Well, here's our mushroom—not too much-room, as Reddy says."

They stood at the entrance to one of the little brown tents. Anne stared. "Goodness!" she said. "And I shall have only half of that?"

Two narrow cots stood against the sides of the tent; a small mirror hung from the post between them at the farther end, over a rough box that seemed to serve for a dressing table. There were, besides Beverly's steamer trunk already in place, two camp stools, and a clothes-line stretched across the tent, on which dangled certain girlish garments. That was all. What a contrast to the dainty boudoir Anne had left behind in Chicago!

"I keep things that mustn't get damp inside my bed," said Beverly demurely. "I don't know what Tante would say. She is so tidy. Your trunk will go there, opposite mine."

"I have three trunks," answered Anne sulkily. "I don't see where they can go."

Beverly laughed. "All full of clothes?" Anne nodded. "Well, you'll never want them here, I reckon," drawled the Southern girl.

"You'll keep them in the store-room, and be glad to get rid of them. You will never need to wear anything but *this*—in Camp, at least." She glanced down at her khaki costume. Anne sniffed.

"I never shall like it," she said. "It's so coarse and ugly."

"I never shall like it," she repeated in a letter to her father which she hastened to write that same afternoon, while she was supposed to be resting. (She did not write to her stepmother.) "Please don't make me stay in this old camp!" Anne continued in her letter. "Mrs. Batchelder is lovely and kind. But she does the cooking herself! And we are all expected to help, taking turns at everything! And we have to take care of our tents, and sweep, and wait on table! Imagine it! There aren't any servants; and they say it is the way the first settlers in America lived, only easier. I think it's horrid! Please can't I come to Canada, or wherever you are? I can keep out of the way, if you're busy. And I won't bother the baby."

When Anne had finished her complaining

letter she sat looking out of the tent into the trees, feeling very lonely. The Camp was silent, for it was the hour when those who wished to do so took their daily nap; while the others were expected to study or to keep quiet or to go away where they could be noisy without disturbing anyone else. Even the irrepressible Twins and Doughboy were invisible. Victor had taken them off on a small hike. Beverly had left Anne in undisputed possession of the tent. She and Cicely were going to pick wild strawberries for supper.

"I wonder what they are doing in Canada now?" thought Anne wistfully. "I wonder why Father wouldn't let me come with them? It must have been Mother's idea." Ever since the baby came Mrs. Poole had acted oddly. But so had Mr. Poole. He had been different for a long time. There was something Anne didn't understand, and it made her uncomfortable. Now they had sent her to this camp of strangers. It was very hard! Tears began to gather in her eyes, as Anne pitied herself.

Just then she became aware of a commotion

in the trees outside the tent. The birds were screaming and complaining wildly; especially one father robin, who seemed to be having a fit of hysterics. "That must be the Round Robin for whom the camp is named," thought Anne. "What a racket! You are so near the birds and things in this old camp that you can't get away from their troubles."

"*What! What—what—what!*" shrieked the old robin, still more anxiously, and Anne saw him flying back and forth about a certain tall cedar. Then the tree itself began to shake. The top was moving as if it were alive, thrashing back and forth strangely.

"What can it be?" thought Anne, laying down her pen and running outside. There was certainly something up in the tree; something alive. She caught the glitter of two yellow eyes peering down at her. "It is an animal!" thought Anne, and for a moment her heart stood still. She was alone in camp for all she knew. And Hugh had told that noon how he had seen a wildcat in the woods last summer. Wildcats were dangerous beasts, sometimes. What should she do? This crea-

ture was certainly furry, but it looked white. Weren't wildcats always grey?

The creature was coming down! A great white cat-like thing, with a thick ruff around its neck, a tail like a feather plume, fur standing on end, and long, fierce whiskers. The robin kept up a ceaseless protest. Evidently he at least had reason to be afraid. Anne stood rooted to the spot with fear, while the animal descended. It gave a leap to the ground and came bounding straight towards her.

"*Purr!*" it cried. "*Purr-miaou!*" "Oh, what is it?" Anne whispered aloud to the air. But she stood her ground.

"Patsy! Patsy!" called a voice, and out of the bungalow ran Nancy. "You naughty cat! Are you bothering the birds again?"

"Is it only a cat?" asked Anne staring. "Why, it looks like a wild beast!"

"Patsy is an honest-to-goodness cat," Nancy assured her proudly. "But our darling Patsy will chase the birds. We do the best we can. We keep him indoors at night. He has never been away from home one single night in all

his little life, Anne, and we don't let him out till after he has been fed in the morning. But he will prowl for birds. Naughty Patsy, to wake up our new guest, too!"

"I wasn't asleep," said Anne simply. Patsy capered across the path and flung himself head foremost at the girls' feet, rolling over in the most engaging fashion, snowy paws in the air. "What a beauty!" cried Anne. "I love Persian cats. They are so rare. He must be very valuable."

"He isn't rare, and he isn't a foreigner. He is a Maine 'shag cat,' born right here in the Harbor," declared Nancy. "There are more 'shags' than 'snug-haired cats,' as the people call them around here. But we like our kitties *well done*, instead of *rare*, don't we, Patsy? He likes you, Anne."

Sure enough. Patsy gave a winsome little purr and ran up to Anne's outstretched hand, as if to welcome the newcomer, and rubbed against her knee.

"You are a darling!" cried Anne, picking up the roly-poly fellow, who wasn't so very big after all, being mostly fluff, like an ice-

cream soda. Patsy licked her cheek with his pink tongue. And Anne smiled. It was the first time Nancy had seen her smile, and she thought how pretty Anne could be.

"He is a fairy cat," announced Nancy. "White cats are always fairies, you know. Look out he doesn't bewitch you, Anne!"

"Nonsense!" cried Anne, turning up her nose at the words, but stroking Patsy's fur very gently indeed. She thought Nancy talked in a very silly way about fairy-tales, almost as if she really believed them. She did not yet know that Nancy loved better than anything else to write fairy-tales herself. And if you do a thing like that, you must at least pretend to believe in it.

Already Patsy had made Anne feel that she had a four-footed friend at camp—which may or may not have been bewitchment. Anyway, she scribbled a postscript to the letter which she had been writing:

"P.S. Patsy is the most beautiful cat I ever saw; fine as the one who took the prize in the last cat show, you remember? Only this one is white. I am going to see if I can't buy him

of Nancy Batchelder and bring him home with me when I leave this old camp. I am sure it will be the only thing I shall want to bring away!"

However, this complaining letter of Anne's was never sent. It remained in her pocket until it graduated from there into the fireplace at Round Robin. For it is a mistake to record your impressions of any place until you have spent at least one whole day and one entire evening there.

That first evening after supper, it being warm and dry, with a young June moon, the Round Robin gathered on the piazza; all but Hugh and Victor who had taken the canoe and had gone out on the water for a little. Perched on the piazza railing, snuggled in the Gloucester hammocks, curled on the grass mats, the Club purred like contented kittens after a good supper. First they played "I'm thinking of something." But afterward they voted that the night was too beautiful for any game. Down in the pasture the fireflies were flickering. Sweet odors came from trees and grass and water; and sweet sounds. Now and

again a little bird chirped away up in a tree-top, as if his happy long day was being continued into a nice dream. The sea itself was crooning a gentle tune.

“Sing, Norma!” begged somebody. And though there was no piano or other accompaniment than the noises of out-doors, Norma was willing enough. She had a beautiful voice, full and rich and mellow for a very young girl, and she loved to sing. She began with quaint melodies in Italian, new and lovely things which the others had never heard, and could not wholly understand. Her voice seemed to melt into the night like the wind and water. Then Norma sang old songs in English which they all knew, and in which they all joined, a jolly little chorus. Anne sang as loudly as anybody, there in the dark corner where nobody could see.

Presently the sound of music came from the ocean too, where they could just spy the red canoe gliding by in the moonlight.

“*Allons, Citoyens! Formez vos bataillons!*” Victor’s pure tenor rose in the stirring strains of the *Marseillaise*, Hugh joining in with a

sturdy baritone. The June wind brought the sound of the young veterans' voices sweetly, and Tante's eyes were moist, as she thought gratefully of what might have been. Instead, those soldier-voices might now be breathing up through the grasses of that land whose very flowers seem to sing the chant of liberty. No! There must be no more war!

Then Round Robin sang *America* with vim. Anne noticed that there were at least two sets of words being sung to the same melody. It is not wholly accident that makes this old tune the hymn of several great nations.

“Hooray!” shouted voices from the shore in response to *America*; and then the echoes woke to a rattling college yell. Hugh and Victor were coming up the path, and Doughboy scuttled barking to meet them.

“Well, it must be time for bed,” said Tante presently. “I suspect Anne Poole has found this a pretty long day, and is quite ready for sleep?”

“It has been a nice day,” said Anne simply. It might not be so bad at Round Robin, after

all, she thought, crumpling up the letter in her pocket.

One more song they sang all together before they separated—their favorite song of all they knew—“*America the Beautiful.*”

*“America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood,  
From sea to shining sea!”*

The voices rang out lustily as the campers strolled away to their various tents. And the last word Anne heard before she swiftly dropped off to sleep in her snug cot was “*America!*” coming clearly and softly from the tent where the young ex-soldiers lay.

## CHAPTER IV

### DICK'S CLAMBAKE

ANNE was awakened at what seemed an unearthly hour by the sound of a bugle. "I can't get 'em up! I can't get 'em up in the morning!" Several merry voices seemed to be singing the words which Anne had never heard before.

At first she did not know where she was. For in spite of the hard little narrow bed she had slept like a top. The brown tent over her head, the spicy air coming in at the open door, the song of birds close by, and their flying silhouettes on the canvas made the queerest ending to her dream of home. But presently she heard a groan from the cot opposite hers, and remembered that she had a tent-mate.

"Time to get up!" Norma's warning voice sounded musically outside, as she passed on her way to the kitchen.

"It's disgusting to be wakened so early!" moaned Beverly, rubbing her eyes. "I wonder if I shall ever get used to it."

Anne looked at her wrist-watch. "Seven! At home I never get up till eight," she complained.

"Neither do I," Beverly yawned. "But here some of us have to help get breakfast, you know. And it's all cleared away by nine! You and I are on the dish-washing squad this week, I reckon. So we have a few minutes' grace."

"I never washed a dish in my life," said Anne peevishly. She was now wide awake.

"It isn't so bad when you do it together," said Beverly, sitting up. "We have jolly times in the out-door pantry."

The woods were ringing with laughter and shouts. Evidently the Twins were already up and doing, and Doughboy was helping them. A clear tenor was singing "*There's a long, long trail*," to the accompaniment of a wood-chopper's axe. It was part of the boys' job to see that the wood-boxes were kept full and

the fires laid, and they usually elected to do most of such chores before breakfast.

Anne had just time to get into the brown middy costume like those the other girls wore, which Tante had asked her to bring. She had never put on anything like it before, and she hated the material and color. But really she looked very nice in the woodsy brown, with her fair skin and bobbed hair.

"You look more like a Dryad than any of us," said Nancy approvingly when Anne appeared for breakfast. And though Anne wasn't quite sure what a Dryad was, she thought by Nancy's tone that it must be a nice sort of creature, and was pleased.

"It is queer how this brown makes you feel like a part of the woods; doesn't it?" she said.

"Now you are a Round Robin!" said Tante, greeting her with a smile.

Breakfast was served on the veranda this beautiful morning, instead of in the living room where they had supped. The long board on trestles, such as the pioneers used, was set with plates and cups of granite ware; twelve places, the sacred number. Tante poured the

steaming chocolate, which Gilda had made, at one end of the table. And this morning it was the turn of Norma to serve at the other end. Such delicious Belgian chocolate! Such eggs and rice in Italian style as Norma had prepared! Up and down went the plates from hand to hand, like an endless chain. For everybody was hungry as a bear. Doughboy sat at a distance whining gently. He was learning good puppy manners, the chief of which is patience. But Patsy had disappeared like a white flash as soon as Tante had let him out, to get his own breakfast of field-mice. Anne thought she had never tasted a better breakfast.

"Now come on, dish-washers!" With much ceremony an apron and clean dish towels were handed to Anne, and a dish mop to Beverly; and presently, with no very good grace on her part, the Golden Girl was initiated into the mysteries of a new job. Lucky it was that the dishes were non-breakable! But Beverly chattered while the process was going on, and the open-air pantry was a merry place.

"How do you like it so far as you have gone,

Anne?" asked Nancy, spoon in hand, poking her head out of the kitchen door.

"It seems queer to me," said Anne, remembering to be sulky. "I can't get used to there being no servants."

"I couldn't at first," confessed Beverly. "Down home even when we go for a few days into the country we take Mammy and old Joe and Mandy—she's their daughter. You just ought to eat Mammy's beaten biscuits and fried chicken!"

"Are they black people?" asked Cicely Vane.

"Yes, certainly," drawled Beverly. "All our servants are niggers."

"Slaves, Beverly?" Freddie bounced suddenly into the conversation in a way he had. Everybody laughed except Freddie and his Twin, who was busy scraping out an empty jam-jar.

"Slaves!" cried Dick who was lugging in a pailful of water. "We don't have any slaves in America, don't you know that, Kid? Why, we fought a war to—" Dick's voice trailed off into silence, and for once that irrepressible

boy looked confused. For Nancy was making frightful faces at him to remind him of the forbidden subject. Once upon a time Beverly's grandfather had fought in that same war of which he spoke; while Dick's own grandfather and Nancy's had fought on the other side, to free the slaves. Those three young men had been college chums before the war. Colonel Peyton, a gallant soldier, had died for the cause he believed to be right. But the Union and Liberty had triumphed. This was the reason why the Northerners had agreed, before Beverly came, not to mention this subject while she was in camp.

"No, we haven't any slaves in America, Freddie," said Tante gently, "though some unfair things are still done, which will have to be corrected. But I believe nearly everybody in this land thinks alike about slavery nowadays."

"I reckon we do," agreed Beverly. "You needn't mind talking about that war before me, Nancy. I'm not sensitive about that. And there's only one Union now, isn't there?"

"That's just what I said about your Revolu-

tion," said Cicely. "We can talk about anything, since we are all friendly, can't we?"

"Of course we can!" nodded Tante. "That is why it is so nice for different kinds of people to get together, always."

"Heia! Hoia!" called a shrill voice in the woods. And down the path came hurrying Nelly Sackett with a basket on her arm. She had run most of the way from the Cove, and was quite breathless.

"I thought I'd never get here before you left!" she gasped. "Uncle Eph was so late this morning. He's been out hauling since four o'clock, and has just got back. But here are your lobsters, Tante. I boiled them myself before I came. I'm glad you waited."

"Dick wouldn't have had a clam-bake without you, Nelly," said Tante. "And anyway, we are not quite ready ourselves."

"Dick has invited us all to a clam-bake," Nancy explained to Anne. "He has done his studying ahead and has a free morning."

"I hate clams," answered Anne with a wry face. "I think I won't go to the clam-bake."

"Oh, very well." Nancy's voice was cool.

"But I think you will be sorry. We have great fun at our picnics, and this one is to be at a new place that Dick has discovered. He and the Twins dug the clams yesterday afternoon. Everybody is going; but you can stay and keep house with Patsy, of course."

Anne had no mind to be left alone in the camp, even with Patsy. "Well, I suppose I had better go with you," she said, rather ungraciously.

"Where are your clams, Dick?" inquired Tante, hailing him as he was starting down to the boat with his two swaggering partners, proud of their importance on this occasion.

"Oh, they're all right," said Dick mysteriously. "I took good care of them yesterday. Don't worry; I didn't leave them in the sun, Tante. I was too clever for that. They are where they'd like to be. Say, there are clams enough at that place to feed the whole United States, I do believe! And all as happy as clams."

Dick came from the far West, where his father had a ranch. Everything about the sea was wonderful to him, and he was never tired

of making new discoveries and serving up old ones in a new dress.

Tante looked thoughtfully at Dick. "Of course you know all about clam-bakes, Dick," she said. "I know how you helped Cap'n Sackett last week. But—hadn't we better take some luncheon besides? We never seem to have too much food on our picnics; and perhaps someone may not care for clams."

"Anne doesn't," Norma volunteered.

"All right." Dick looked a little disappointed. "I thought we'd got everything ready, and for once the girls needn't bother. There will be clams enough for everybody who likes them. But if anyone is fussy—all right-o."

"Lend a hand, girls," said Tante. "We'll put up some sandwiches and eggs in a few minutes."

After the sandwiches were made, and while they waited for the eggs to hard-boil, Cicely went for the botany box which she always carried to get "specimens"; and Nancy, hovering about the living room, finally pounced on something for which she was looking.

"What's that pill-box for, Nancy?" queried Eddie, the sharp-eyed.

"Well, if you must know, I'm going to hunt for some fern-seed," said Nancy rather shyly. "You know to-night is Midsummer Eve. If I find some fern-seed I am going to try to become invisible."

"Pooh!" cried Dick. "You are a goose, Nancy!" But just then Patsy came scampering up in a wide circle and jumped on Nancy's shoulder.

"You see, he knows!" she laughed. "He wants to go with me. My fairy cat is full of mischief to-day. He acts perfectly wild. He knows it is Midsummer Eve, don't you, Patsy? But *you* can see fairies without fern-seed, I'm sure."

"You don't really believe——" began Anne. But she was interrupted by a shout from the pier. "Hurry up, girls! Tide is just right! Oh, Reddy!"

The Round Robin seized the baskets and wraps and hurried down the slip where the *Togo* was waiting. Tante and the Twins followed. Doughboy made fourteen out of what

Norma called an "unlucky number." Patsy was not invited. He was too "temperamental," Dick declared. It was a crowded boatful. But some of them sat on the floor and some on the deck with their legs dangling over. While the Twins and the pup chose their favorite safe place in the tiny cabin, and played at being stowaways.

It was a good hour's run across the Bay and up the entrance to a creek which Dick the adventurous had discovered the week before. As the boat entered the creek they saw the waves rushing in a mad race to fill up the little basin before it should be high water; when they would as madly begin to rush out again, after the excitable manner of tides.

"It wasn't like this yesterday afternoon," said Dick proudly. "Why, it's finer even than I thought!"

"You came at low tide, you land-lubber," said Hugh. "You forget the difference the tide makes in morning and afternoon."

A queer look came over Dick's face. "That's so," he admitted. "But isn't this pretty?"

They agreed that it certainly was. Along the tide-rapids great rocks were half-uncovered, and on these were little brown heads bobbing, smooth grey bodies rolling over and over in ecstatic somersaults.

“Oh what is it? What is it?” cried the Twins, popping out of the cabin when they heard the girls exclaim.

“It’s baby seals,” said Hugh. “They are doing their daily gymnastics, just as you do, Kids. I expect it’s like the setting-up exercises we had in the Army, eh, Victor?”

“I should call them sitting-down exercises,” laughed Victor.

“Maybe they are just breakfast rolls,” whispered Dick to Anne, who giggled, in spite of Nancy’s growl of protest at such punning, which the Club had agreed was not to be encouraged.

“What a place for a picnic!” cried Tante as they passed a beautiful point where the water was most rapid and where a group of pines overhung the tide. “Can’t we stop here, Dick?”

“Oh, no,” he assured her. “We have got to have the clam-bake where the clams are.

Wait till you see the beach! A great place for a fire, as safe as snails. There's the place, just beyond that rock!"

Just beyond the rock the boat drew up to the shore, a rock-strewn beach with a spit of sand below, now covered by the high tide. Hugh jumped out and held the boat for the rest to descend. "Fine!" said he. "Where are your clams, Reddy?"

Dick stood looking at the beach dubiously. "Jiminy!" he exclaimed. "I forgot about the tide! I dug the clams in the afternoon."

"And we buried them in boxes down in the sand," volunteered Eddie.

"So they would be happy and damp until picnic-time," continued Freddie. "Where are they now, Dick?"

"Where indeed!" cried Dick, mournfully. "Still happy and damp, I guess."

*"There once was a boy from the West,"* chanted Nancy, beginning a limerick to celebrate the affair in Club style:

*"Who invited a Club as his guest,  
To a clam-bake with pride;  
But he left out the tide—"*

she hesitated for the last line—

*“And it played a low untidy jest!”*

Dick finished the limerick himself, amid applause and laughter. “How long will it be before these clams are uncovered, Tante?” he asked wistfully.

“It is high tide, now, and you can’t get at them for nearly six hours,” she laughed.

Dick groaned. “Those inconsiderate old tides of yours!” he said. “Now, out on the prairie you know where you are when you are there. The grass doesn’t go ebbing and flowing down and up. It stays put. I like solid ground, I do.”

“If you were only Moses now,” Nancy teased him, “you could perhaps make the sea open and let you get at the clams.”

“Or if you were Joshua you could do something with the tide,” suggested Victor.

“If your fairies were any good you’d make them get busy, Nancy,” retorted Dick. “But as it is, I suppose we’ll just have to go home.”

“We’d all starve to death before six hours,” agreed Victor.

"Oh, no, we have a luncheon," laughed Tante. "I had a vision that something like this might happen. I brought bacon and the coffee pot."

"Hurrah!" shouted the Twins, who had been looking very gloomy.

"I can fry bacon," said Dick humbly, "if I am a duffer about tides."

"All right. Let's build a fire in this safe place, away from the trees and grass."

They scattered about for fire-wood, and presently they had a fine blaze under the shelter of a big rock. "It is a beautiful place for a picnic, Dick," said Tante comfortingly. "I am sure the Indians would have liked it themselves for a camp."

"You're right," said Dick. "Your coast Indians did have some advantage over our plain Indians, I'll agree."

"I'd like to stay here and live!" cried Norma, clasping her hands in the dramatic way she had.

"Oh, Norma! With only the clams to listen to your music?" said Beverly.

"Well, somebody else has thought as Norma

does before now," chuckled Dick. "I haven't shown all the wonders of my discovery yet. Look, there's sweet grass over in the bog behind the bank there. And great tall sedges for baskets. Then look at this bank itself! See, it's made out of clam-shells. I think the Indians must have piled them here, long ago."

"It's an old Indian shell-heap, by Jove!" exclaimed Hugh. "Reddy, you've made a discovery after all. They must have been picnicking here for generations before we were born, by the size of this heap."

"I thought it was a pretty good place for a clam-bake," said Dick modestly. "Even if you don't get your clams."

While they waited for the coffee and bacon, some of them fell to digging in the shell-heap. They found only a few charred bones, that looked like bird-bones, and some bits of broken pottery. But even these gave them a thrill. The Indians had been there! What had they been doing? They could imagine all sorts of things.

They could hardly bear to stop digging even when the lunch call sounded. But how

good the coffee smelled and how delicious the bacon tasted, as they sat around the bonfire which had died down to glowing coals, and munched the luncheon that was an after-thought of Tante's.

"I say!" cried Dick suddenly, with his mouth full of bacon, "I wonder if we look like the bands of Fijis who used to camp here?"

"Fijis, you cowboy!" interrupted Hugh. "They were proper Penobscots who owned this part of the world."

"How I'd like to see them sitting around here, chucking their clam-shells one by one onto that heap——"

"Unless they were waiting for the tide to go out, so they could get the clams," tittered Nancy. Dick shied a pebble at her and went on with his word-picture.

"—Sitting around in a circle, gossiping about that gay little massacre they had just pulled off on the island over there. *Wow!*" Dick gave a western war-whoop that made the girls jump, and Norma covered her ears with horror. Three crows arose protesting frantically.

from some nook beyond the bank, and flapped away inland, cawing bad luck to these invaders.

“Yes. I feel like an Indian myself!” volunteered Beverly unexpectedly. “I had an ancestor who was an Indian, you know. Pocahontas was her name.”

“Pocahontas!” several voices echoed the familiar name in wonder.

“I know about her!” chimed the Twins. “She ran out and saved Captain Smith”—“from having his head cut off”—“no, from being roasted alive!”

“Now I remember,” said Tante, “your mother’s family was very proud of being descended from Captain Smith’s dusky friend, Beverly. So are many of the old Virginian families. Pocahontas was a king’s daughter. Better still, she was a generous noble, loyal woman.”

“She married an Englishman named Rolfe, and went to live in London,” added Cicely Vane. “I have seen her grave in a church in Gravesend.”

“She ought to have married Captain

Smith," said Norma, who was romantic. "That would have been beautiful!"

"I reckon he was too old for her," said Beverly. "She called him her foster-father. I don't know what those first Virginians would have done without Pocahontas to keep the Indians friendly."

"Say, isn't it great to have a real Indian here!" cried Dick. "I believe Beverly does look a little red, doesn't she?"

Beverly certainly turned red as they all stared at her black hair and eyes, her fine nose and high cheek-bones.

"I'd be proud to," she said with dignity. "I always liked the Indians. I think they were treated mighty meanly by the white folks, North and South. You talk about the slaves!"

"Didn't Indians scalp the white settlers?" "And burn them and torture them?" The Twins had been hearing tales from Cooper told by Dick.

"Yes, they did," admitted Beverly. "They didn't know any better. The white men cheated them; and *they* knew better!"

"I've seen Indians around the Harbor sometimes," volunteered Nelly Sackett. "I didn't think much of them; shiftless-looking people, with baskets to sell."

Just then Cicely, who was facing away from the others, caught Nancy's arm. "Look there!" she whispered pointing towards the woods behind them.

Out of the shadow was creeping the strangest figure. A bent old woman with a shawl drawn over her head and shoulders was approaching cautiously. Her grey hair escaped in elf-locks, her cheeks were wrinkled like the sand at low tide. She looked like a witch. On her back was a great bundle of grass and reeds, tied with a rope. In her hand was a canoe paddle. Around her neck dangled a chain of shells and beads. She wore moccasins on her feet. She came toward the fire with a grim, sulky look on her face, and her little sunken eyes glanced from figure to figure warily. Eddie and Freddie shrank close to their mother's skirts. Dick uttered a low whistle.

"You wanted to see an Indian," whispered



look- whispered- Cicely



Hugh, "Well, here she is!" Everybody sat quite still, while the old crone came close to the group.

"How!" she said at last in a low grunt.

"Good day," answered Tante pleasantly. "We are picnicking, as you see, in this pretty place."

"Heard war-whoop," said the hag sullenly. "Came to see who is on the land of my fathers. Her look was a challenge. The party exchanged glances. Here was a strange sequel to their talk!

"My father was Chief," the old woman drew herself up with dignity. "But I am all there is left of my tribe. All this land was ours," she waved her paddle, apparently indicating the whole shore of the bay. "The white men took it from us. Now I have to get grass for baskets where I can. That is all for me to do."

"Have you baskets to sell?" asked Tante gently.

"Not here," said the squaw. "But I make them. Sometimes."

"Well, if you will bring some to us we would like to buy," said Tante.

"Mother!" Hugh tried to catch Tante's eyes with a warning shake of his head. But the old woman answered Tante quickly.

"Yes. I will come. Next week. You live over there?" she pointed in the right direction. "I know." She turned upon the young men with a sudden snarl. "Why you make war-whoop? Eh?"

Dick stammered. "Oh—just for fun!" he said. There was a black look in the old woman's eyes and she muttered something below her breath. Then as suddenly she turned to go. Just then Freddie had an inspiring thought.

"Beverly is an Indian," too!" he cried, pointing at the girl. "Pocahontas was her grandmother."

"Hush!" Dick jerked Freddie into silence.

"Pocahontas?" the old squaw repeated the name and eyed Beverly strangely. "My name Sal Seguin." They could not tell whether or not she understood what Freddie had said. Beverly herself had nothing to say.

"Ugh!" grunted the squaw at last. "White Indian? Ugh!" Whether in disgust or

pleasure, she shook her head once at Beverly. Then without another word she disappeared up the bank.

"Well, you young monkey!" said Hugh to his little brother, "you did make a hit, didn't you?"

"I didn't mind," said Beverly. "Why should I? I will buy some baskets of the poor old thing when she comes." But Hugh looked troubled. "I'm sorry she is coming to Round Robin, Mother!" he said. "I don't like the old party's looks. She doesn't resemble Beverly in the least!" and he made a low bow to the Southerner.

"I've seen her before," said Victor unexpectedly. "Once, when I was picking strawberries away over on the mountain. And once when I landed to take a look at the boat-house of Idlewild. She was prowling about there."

"I'll tell Uncle Eph," said Nelly. "He won't like that."

"Is she your grandmother, Beverly?" suddenly asked Eddie, who was much confused by the previous remark of his twin.

"Will she join the Round Robin?" ques-

tioned Freddie. At that there was a roar of laughter. But Hugh capped the laugh with a surprise.

"You girls needn't laugh so hard," said he. "For once Freddie has said something not altogether foolish. Some of the Indians had a Round Robin of their own—a 'get together.' The very first League of Nations was American after all! The Five Nations of the Iroquois were just that."

"It has taken the world a good while to catch up with those savages!" sighed Tante.

As the *Togo* chug-chugged noisily home over the waves that afternoon, the girls spied a birch canoe creeping silently along the shore, propelled by experienced hands. And the canoe was filled with bundles of green.

"I guess old Hoky-Poky had a profitable day," chuckled Dick.

"Well, so have we, in spite of clams," laughed Nancy. "Don't you think so, Anne?"

"It has been very pleasant," said Anne with reserve as she stepped ashore. "But that old woman made me nervous!"

## CHAPTER V

### MIDSUMMER EVE

“OH dear! I forgot my fern-seed!” cried Nancy, as they reached Round Robin. “Why didn’t you remind me, Cicely, when we were getting the sweet grass? The clam-bake was so exciting I quite forgot about to-night.”

“I think it’s too early for fern-seed,” said Cicely. “I haven’t seen any this year. But if there is any to be found, surely it would have been on that mysterious island, where there seems to be pretty nearly everything else.”

“Including witches,” laughed Dick.

“And a buried treasure of clams, Reddy,” added Hugh.

“Perhaps Patsy will help me find some fern-seed,” said Nancy, running up the path to greet the stay-at-home. “He knows every-

thing, I believe. He must be hungry for his dinner—Patsy, Patsy!" Nancy began to call through the woods and to give the little shrill whistle which the white cat always understood and answered with his agreeable *miaou*.

But this time there was no answer. Patsy did not come. Patsy was not to be found. Not even the lure of lobster set appetizingly out for his supper, nor the tempting sound of a plate being scraped with a knife, which had hitherto been an unfailing charm, recalled the white kitten to his mistress.

What was to be done? The camp was in an uproar. Never had Patsy been out at night. It could not be allowed! The Twins went off in one direction, the boys in others. The girls scattered through woods and along the shore. Nancy knew his favorite haunts. But Patsy was not under the great beech tree where the squirrels chattered. He was not cushioned in the fragrant cedar-bushes over the wall in the country of the field-mice. The dell under the great pine told no news of him. Dick found no print of little feet in the mud of the brook, or in the sand of the bathing beach. . .

"Patsy! Patsy!" the woods rang with the anxious cry; the evening bird-chorus seemed to take it up with a mocking cadenza. For they had no cause to love Patsy the prowler.

Finally the Camp gave him up for the night. Nancy could hardly eat her supper she was so worried. "I shall never see my kitten again!" she wailed. "The foxes will get him. Or he will tumble into the sea and be drowned. Or he may stray off into the deep woods and become a wild cat!"

"You needn't worry," soothed her mother. "Patsy can take care of himself, like any native. I'm sure of that."

"But he never was out alone all night," lamented Nancy. "And this is Midsummer Eve, of all times! Who knows what may happen to him?"

"If Patsy is a fairy cat he will surely be safe," Cicely comforted her cousin. This thought alone seemed to give Nancy a little hope. She forgot all about fern-seed and the charms she had intended to try on this magic night. After supper she and Cicely retired early to their tent in the Fairy Ring.

"What a fuss about a cat!" thought some of the campers. But most of them were as sorry as could be. For they loved the beautiful Patsy.

"I sha'n't sleep all night," Nancy declared.

"Nonsense!" Cicely retorted, being a practical common-sense person. "What good will that do Patsy?"

"He might come home in the night," said Nancy dubiously.

"Well, if he does, he will be sure to tell you," said Cicely sleepily. And that was the last she knew for a long time.

In the middle of the night, Cicely suddenly opened her eyes and sat up in bed. The woods outside were very still; but something was moving in the tent.

"Nancy! Are you asleep?" whispered Cicely. The moon shone in through the door-flap and Cicely saw her cousin creeping mysteriously about the floor. "What is the matter, Nancy?" asked Cicely again.

"I'm trying to find my moccasins. I'm going out to look for Patsy. I'm sure I can find him in the moonlight," Nancy answered in

the same whisper. "I can't stand it, Cicely!"

"But it's the middle of the night!" Cicely's voice faltered. "Wait till morning, Nancy, do."

"I can't wait till morning," Nancy said; and Cicely knew she had been crying by the sound of her voice. "I must go now."

"Then I'll go too," sighed Cicely, loyal, though her heart balked at the idea of braving this American wilderness in the dead of night.

The two girls slipped moccasins on their bare feet and threw on their dressing-gowns; then stole out of the tent into the moonlight, which silvered everything with a magic touch. The whole lit-up world looked wonderfully beautiful. But the shadows were blacker than ever, by the same charm. It did not seem like the world they knew by day.

They crept carefully by the sleeping tents. In the door of the third one stood a little figure, white and fairy-like, looking out into the woods with big eyes. "Why, it's Anne Poole!" Nancy whispered to Cicely who clung to her hand. "She isn't asleep, either!"

Anne joined them immediately. "You are going to look for Patsy?" she said. "I thought

of doing that, too. But I wouldn't have dared go alone. May I come? He is such a darling kitty!"

Nancy's heart warmed to the Golden Girl. "Ah, do!" she said. "Let's get out into the woods." She felt the two girls shiver at the words. But they were both bound to the adventure. "I have a feeling that Patsy is in the woods," whispered Nancy.

Step by step, gingerly at first, then more confidently as they grew accustomed to the shadows, the three girls walked down the path into the woods. "Patsy! Patsy!" called Nancy in the littlest of voices, so as not to waken the Camp. But nothing answered. To Anne, fresh from the City, the stillness was almost *loud*. She could hear her heart beat, *thump thump*. In the woods were strange little noises; the snapping of twigs, tiny rustles; now and then a smothered chirp. The night was not empty, but full of life that they could not see. It gave a strange feeling to know this. A hundred little eyes might be looking at them this minute! A white cat is not easily hidden. But Patsy did not appear.





"Let's follow the brook down to the shore," whispered Nancy, squeezing Cicely's hand before she let it drop; for they had to go in single file down the path. "If I don't find him there I will go back, I promise. Patsy isn't likely to cross the brook. Cats don't like running water, you know."

"Neither do fairies!" murmured Cicely.

"I was thinking of that, too," said Nancy. But Anne Poole said: "He might be up in the top of a tree."

They crept through the silvery meadow, along the little path that Patsy loved, for by day it was full of pleasant crawling, creeping, hopping things. The girls did not like to think of this just now. They kept calling the cat under their breath. But no Patsy answered. No little white furry shape came running to meet them, as he always did when they chanced to pass his ambush.

"We shall see him right away if he is here," said Nancy eagerly, as they came out on the shore, almost as bright as day in the moonlight. Here the brook trickled down over the rocks in a baby waterfall, a favorite spot of

Patsy's, where he was accustomed to vary his hunting trips with a drink. But no Patsy was there, and Nancy gave a groan. "I give up!" she said.

Just then Cicely clutched her cousin's arm and drew her back behind a screen of elder bushes. At the same moment Anne seized her hand. "There is somebody under that tree!" she whispered.

Sure enough. Under a drooping fir tree a figure was crouched, her knees drawn up to her chin. By her side was a bundle.

"It looks like a witch!" murmured Nancy. And Cicely thought so too. But Anne knew better. "It's the Indian woman," she said, "Sal Seguin."

"So it is!" The girls stared. And Anne had a dreadful thought. "Maybe she has Patsy in that bundle. Maybe she took him for his beautiful fur!" But she did not tell this thought to Nancy.

The old woman sat with her shawl drawn over her head, apparently dozing. The girls watched her, without moving—five, perhaps ten minutes. Then Sal Seguin stirred and

glanced over her shoulder, almost as if she felt someone was looking at her. Presently she got up and went down to the water's edge, taking her bundle with her. They saw her get into her canoe and paddle silently away towards the Harbor. Her skilful strokes made no sound.

"What do you suppose she was doing down here?" asked Cicely, the first to speak.

"I hope she hasn't got Patsy in that bundle!" shivered Anne, unable to conceal her fear any longer.

"Patsy! Oh, she couldn't keep him in there!" cried Nancy. "He is too full of life and temper. You would know if you had ever tried to put him in his traveling basket, Anne."

But Anne thought about that silky white fur, and was not convinced.

They did not need the North Star, or the bright Cassiopea's Chair that stood over the camp, to show them the way back. The path was as plain as day. The thought of that old woman behind them made them glance over their shoulders now and then as

they crept silently back up the hill, and perhaps made them walk a little faster.

"I wish Beverly had been here," said Nancy when they were almost at the top of the slope. "Perhaps she would have dared to speak to the Indian and ask if she had seen Patsy."

"Beverly is sound asleep," said Anne. "Nothing seems to disturb her. I tumbled over my camp-stool, but she didn't hear."

"Thank you for coming," said Nancy, touching Anne's hand as they parted at the Fairy Ring.

"I'm sorry we didn't find him," said Anne earnestly. "Maybe he will come yet."

Nancy shook her head. "No," she said, "I haven't any hope now."

At breakfast the three girls came in looking rather pale and very sleepy. Patsy was still missing. They could hardly make the others believe that they had really gone down the pasture by moonlight. And when they told about Sal Seguin, Dick insisted that they must have been dreaming. But when they mentioned Sal's bundle, Hugh thought, as Anne had done, about Patsy's white fur. "I

wish we had never seen that old Indian!" he said.

Nancy had stolen away as soon as possible to make a last despairing search for her pet. And while the others were still talking about the adventure of the night before, questioning Cicely and Anne, as they wiped the breakfast dishes, the Twins set up a shout.

"Here she is! Nancy has Patsy in her arms."

Breathless Nancy was toiling up the slope, carrying the great ball of fluff. Her eyes were shining and she laughed out loud with happiness as she shouted "I've got him! I've got him! The prodigal son!"

"Where did you find him, Nancy?" asked Anne dropping her dish towel and running to stroke the soft white fur of the blinking cat.

"Right in the middle of the path!" said she. "I went down the same way we took last night, to the shore. And there he lay just above the spot where we saw Sal Seguin, under a little juniper bush, right in the path. He just lay there, too tired to move. He couldn't drag himself up the slope, but he answered when

I called. Such a weary, worn, limp cat! What do you suppose he had been doing to get so tired? Where do you suppose he had been all night?"

"*Nobody knew where Kilmeny had been*" said Cicely, quoting the old ballad about the girl who went to visit the Fairies.

"Did you go off with the Fairies, Patsy?" asked Nancy, putting her face close to that of the white cat.

"*Mi-aou!*" cried Patsy dolorously.

"I believe he did!" whispered Nancy to Cicely Vane.

"I'm glad he's safe," said Anne, and the white cat licked her cheek feebly. He was almost too tired to be polite.

"Anyway, Sal Seguin didn't carry him off," said Hugh. "That was what I suspected."

"Perhaps she did, and he found his way back," suggested Anne. "That was what I was afraid of, too."

"I believe he was there all the time and we didn't see him," declared Nancy. "I believe he found the fern-seed that we missed, ate it, and became invisible."

Anyway, wherever he had been, Patsy slept all that day on Nancy's bed, the most exhausted kitten ever seen. And he never told the Club what adventures he had experienced on Midsummer Eve.

Hugh and Victor met Captain Sackett that morning when they went to the Harbor for the mail, and they asked him if he had seen an old Indian woman in the neighborhood.

The Captain scratched his head thoughtfully. "Why yes," said he, in his nasal drawl, "I did see an old woman in a shawl early this mornin', when I went haulin'. Yes, she had a bundle in her canoe. I guess it was grass, or herbs or somethin'. She's quite a character. But I haven't seen her around for some time till this mornin'. They say her tribe owned this whole shore once. But not in my time, nor in my father's or grandfather's, I guess. The Indians were treated pretty mean, sometimes."

"Where do you suppose she is now, Cap'n?" queried Hugh. The Captain shrugged his shoulders. "Who knows?" said he. "We can't keep tabs on everything that goes on

along this coast full of islands. I guess I'll run up and take a look at Idlewild this afternoon. Mr. Poole asked me to kinder keep an eye on it. Say, has the little girl been up there yet? Little Anne, I mean?"

The boys said No, she hadn't had time yet. The old man sighed. "I hope she'll come to see me too," he said. "But I don't want you to tell her so."

Hugh laughed. "Whatever you tell her, she is likely to do the opposite thing," he said. "She's a spoiled kid, Cap'n."

Again the Captain sighed. "I guess she is," he said.

But Victor put in a good word for the newcomer. "She's awfully fond of animals, anyway," he said.

"A little cat!" laughed Hugh.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PATCHWORK QUILT

“O H, rain!” Norma lifted her head from her pillow and groaned. “No swim this morning, and Victor was just teaching me that new stroke!” Norma hated rain. Grey skies of New England always put her into a bad temper. But her little Belgian tent-mate was philosophical.

“We need ze rain for ze garden,” said Gilda, “and for ze spring of wasser. Tante said, if it not rains in July, it be bad for us, the spring running dry.”

“I wonder how the Golden Girl likes living in a damp tent!” thought Norma with a grimace as she put on her wrinkled blouse and brushed her unwrinkled hair. “It’s all very well for you crinkly girls, Gilda. But do look at me!” She stared in the small mirror tragically.

"Pooh!" said Gilda, who was learning a few Americanisms. "Nobody care about crinkles or wrinkles in a camp. Zat is what Tante said. I like zat. Not so? Nobody mind also leetle damps."

"*Leetle damps!*" Anne Poole found it more than a little damp as she picked her way from rock to rock and around tiny lakes in the path that led from the Fairy Ring to the bungalow. She wondered what campers could find to do on such a dismal day, and regretted the comforts of Idlewild; the pool room, the piano and victrola, the library with its elaborately bound volumes. Anne had been the only one who read books at Idlewild. Mr. Poole had put them in as a part merely of the library furnishings. So the library at Idlewild had been Anne's almost undisturbed domain.

Though the Camp had turned out to be quite tolerable during the week of sunny days, with so many pleasant new things to do, Anne wondered what in the world would keep her from being bored by a deluge like this. But to her amazement she found that *leetle damps*

did not make much difference to the Round Robin. To be sure, Dick was the only one who went for the morning swim. He declared it was drier in the salt water than on land. To-day nobody was interested in going to pick the wild strawberries which were growing sweeter and ruddier every day in the meadows back of the Fairy Ring. But the boys went about looking like fishermen in their yellow slickers and hats; for the mail had to be fetched from the village and the milk from Maguire's farm, rain or shine. Cicely also put on her mackintosh and went forth as usual to "botanize." You cannot keep an English girl indoors just on account of rain. Presently she returned, rosy-cheeked, to tell about the lovely green rosettes that were unfolding on the old spruce trees, and the wonderful color in the deep woods. The surf on the rocks was splendid too, she said. So everybody had to run out to see; everybody but Patsy, who looked very complacent and fluffy, when they all returned dripping and draggled, but jolly.

But there was also plenty to do indoors that kept the day from being really "dull." House-

work! Anne had never imagined that there could be any fun in the kitchen! But as Tante managed it, there was a regular competition to see who should make the greatest hit, as it came the turn of each girl to make a special dish for breakfast or lunch or supper. And a rainy day was a fine undistracted time for the amateur cooks to get ahead with their experiments in cake and pudding and bread, fudge and cream peppermints.

A rainy day is good for basket-making, too; for the grass of sedge or raffia is easier to work when it is a little damp. Beverly spread herself in a window-seat of the living room and made great progress on her basket, while some of the rest did their weekly mending, and Norma read aloud. Nancy, however, retired to a dry quiet corner of the bungalow loft, to finish the fairy story which had been waiting for a wet day to be "transplanted," as she called it. Then there were always letters to write, if one had time.

But no one would have had time to spare at Round Robin even during the Flood, Nancy declared; with a pair of lively Twins,

a brown dog and a white cat eager to be played with. A girl who loved children and animals had no excuse for being bored. Anne soon had her hands full, when the children found what wonderful things she could make with scissors and paper. As a child left to her own resources most of the time, Anne had learned how to amuse herself in these simple ways. The time went so fast that she was amazed indeed when the tea-squad demanded her help. Anne had already learned how to set a table very nicely.

But the best part of a rainy day at camp—like the best part of many a speaker's address—is the end of it. By evening everybody in camp is tired of being busy and of moving about. Everybody wants to keep still and be amused.

After supper the boys heaped up a great fire in the fire-place, and everyone drifted into her favorite seat or onto his favorite rug or cushion. Anne Poole retired into a dim corner, where she could watch the faces in the firelight without being watched herself. She was still studying all these strangers

critically, trying to see how they could possibly be so different from the persons she had hitherto known. And yet, as she had to confess to herself, they were not so terrible after all; not nearly so uncomfortable to live with as she had feared they would be.

"Let's pop some corn!" said Eddie Batchelder, "mayn't we, Mumsie?"

"Let's tell stories," suggested Norma. "Everybody tell a story but me! You have got one all ready, Nancy. I saw you writing it this morning!"

"It's only just transplanted. It isn't blossomed yet," protested Nancy.

"You tell a story, Tante," suggested Beverly. "You haven't told one this year."

"If everybody were here," said Tante.

"We're all here," said Anne, counting around the circle, completed by Doughboy and Patsy, curled up on the rugs.

"No. Nelly Sackett isn't here," several voices cried. "But it is raining so hard I suppose she won't come."

But just then there was a tap on the door, and in pattered a little figure in rubber boots

and yellow slicker, with the Captain's tar-paulin hat drawn down over her curls which were kinky with rain-drops. The Twins rushed upon her and seized her umbrella, and lantern, while Dick undertook to relieve her of her rubber boots. Tante asked her if she had not found it hard to keep the road on this dark night, but Nelly said Oh, no; her feet seemed to know the way. Whereupon Dick began to chant his favorite poem, accenting it as he pulled at the reluctant boots:

“*My feet they haul me round the house,  
They hoist me up the stairs,  
I on-ly have to steer them and  
They ride me everywheres!*”

“There you are, Miss Sackett. Dry as the Ark!”

“I should think you-all would be afraid to come alone, Nelly,” Beverly drawled. “Why, I wouldn’t go out of the house alone at noon; let alone a dark night in the rain! Goodness! You are as bad as Nancy with her moonlight rambles!”

Beverly's mother had been Tante's best friend, when they were girls at school together. But the children of those two school-girls had been born in places where the customs and conditions were so different that it affected their whole lives. Tante's children were brought up never to be afraid to go anywhere, ever. Freedom is always safest where everyone has always been free. So she answered Beverly—"It's different up North, Beverly. At least, it always has been. Nelly isn't afraid of the dark, are you? But I wonder you didn't prefer your cosy home on such a stormy night, my Dear."

"I just had to come!" said Nelly. "Mother and Uncle Eph have gone to meeting. I guessed there would be stories here."

"Stories! Stories!" clamored Eddie, who was intently watching Freddie's small success with the corn-popper, now jiggling furiously.

"I think I shall have to bring out the Patch-work Quilt, to illustrate my story," said Tante. Nancy and the Twins began to giggle, and Hugh whistled. They alone knew what their mother meant, for it was one of the family

jokes. Tante routed Norma and Beverly out of one of the window seats in order to get a rolled-up bundle from the interior; and presently spread it out upon the floor in the middle of the room. It was a patchwork quilt of faded and old-fashioned calico squares, set in a curious pattern; half-finished and with ragged edges.

"This is our family fancy-work," said Tante. "I found it up in the garret of our old house when I was a little girl. My mother said as a tiny child she remembered it half finished. She added a few squares herself in a half-hearted way, she said. It must have been begun by some girl in our family before the Revolution, and has been growing gradually ever since, square by square. But we are not much of a fancy-work family, I fear. I meant to finish the quilt before I was married. But I never did; just as my mother never did. So I gave it to Nancy. She works on it sometimes, I believe."

"I have made four squares in fifteen years!" laughed Nancy, "those with my blue-and-

white gingham in. But it takes a lot of time. I'd rather write stories."

"As family fancy-work it seems likely to last for a good many generations," said Mrs. Batchelder. "We use it now chiefly as a notebook for stories."

Seeing that Gilda looked puzzled, Freddie explained by putting his thumb in the middle of a black square nearest to him, as the quilt lay spread on the floor. "*That* was a pirate story," he said. "And the blue one with stars on it was about a sea-captain and a stowaway. And the little mousy-grey square was the girl-Pilgrim who came over in the *Mayflower* and was Mother's own ancestress." A howl from Eddie interrupted him.

"Freddie! You're burning up the pop-corn!" Sure enough. A dubious smell reminded Freddie of his forgotten duty. The pop-corn had hopped as fast as it could, when he forgot to shake it; but it could not hop fast enough to keep its feet from getting scorched. Freddie looked ruefully at the charred black men, and according to the rules of the game, handed over the popper to Eddie,

who took it importantly, and after refilling it began to jiggle it with great care.

“Speaking of your little grey *Mayflower* maid, Freddie,” said Tante, “she had just five kernels of parched corn for her first American meal, they say. I hope they weren’t so black as these of yours, Sonny!” Tante was looking at the quilt thoughtfully, and Norma called out: “Story! Story!”

“Well,” said Tante, “I am thinking of another sort of story—not that one. Once upon a time there was a great, big Patchwork Quilt, 3000 miles wide, made up of ever so many little ‘squares’ of irregular shape. Not one of them was really square; any more than are the ‘squares’ in our cities. Every square was itself made up of all sorts of little patches and pieces and scraps. Some of the pieces came from the North where it is cold; and some from the South where it is hot. They were all different—no two just alike in color or material or quality. Some came from the East with its strange wonder and brightness; and some were of the West, rough and serviceable. There were fine and precious squares, and

others of flimsy or even shoddy goods; many were coarse, and some were worn pretty thin. But pieced together and backed and quilted, sewed with unbreakable thread, they became strong and durable. It made a firm, warm quilt without any rips or holes. The chief beauty of the quilt was this *wholeness*, this keeping together in an unbroken pattern of squares."

Some of the group were looking puzzled. "What does Mother mean, Hugh?" asked Freddie who was leaning against his big brother's knee, critically watching his Twin's efforts with the pop-corn. Gilda listened eagerly for Hugh's answer. "America!" he whispered under his breath, and he looked across at Victor, who nodded, squaring his shoulders. They had both fought for America, and loved her name.

"If this quilt had been all of one kind of material," Tante went on, "it would have been old-fashioned, like the other quilts, some of which were very beautiful, but badly worn. Some of them were tattered and rent into bits. You can see them on the map, painted one

solid color; but that doesn't show how frayed they are at the edges where they have been torn or snipped away by cruel shears."

"*'Shears'* means wars," explained Victor under his breath. "Cruel they are! The old quilts are the old kingdoms of Europe, Freddie."

"It's a funny kind of story!" said Eddie dubiously, agitating the popper, and not to be distracted by Freddie's whispers.

"But this quilt I'm telling about," went on Tante, "this new quilt was made up of pieces out of nearly all the old ones; fresh, bright pieces, most of them, the best and strongest part of the many-colored counterpanes of the world. Every one of these pieces was needed to make up the new pattern, sewed with the thread of old tradition, law and order. Every patch had its own place in the great getting-together, named a Union."

"Why, the United States is a great Round Robin, isn't it, Mumsie?" cried Nancy. "I never thought of it before."

"So it is!" nodded Victor. "And some day we shall have a still bigger League, when all

the nations of the world get together and make their squares fit into a beautiful pattern, without losing each its own shape."

"That's it!" Tante nodded. "The whole world will not be *free* until it is *bound together*; bound by something besides cables and railroads and wireless."

Gilda was bending over the quilt studying it eagerly. "Zere is a square of *La Belgique*!" she cried, pointing to a patch of black, red, and yellow. "Hurrah for brave Belgium!" cried Dick. "We need her pluck that saved the world."

"And there is a bit of Italy," said Norma, laying a finger on a cornerwise patch of red and green, with white between.

"Mother had a dress of that pretty print," interpolated Tante. "How Italy does bring brightness everywhere! And there is the tri-color of France. The blue and red are a little faded, Victor, because France with her fine gifts has been here in our quilt a long time; among the very first. French sailors, Norse and Icelandic, all came to America before the Spanish named it and the English mapped it."

"My grandmother was French," said Nelly Sackett. "She came from Canada."

"I am part Spanish," said Dick. "I guess that's why I am so much interested in pirates. I'm a regular Patchwork Quilt myself! I'm part Irish and part Dutch and part Swedish, too. They all had a hand in building America."

"You're an old Hyphen!" laughed Hugh. "It's the Hyphens who make most of the trouble in this country. They think more about the land from which their ancestors came than about this one that claims their whole allegiance."

"Hyphen yourself!" retorted Dick. "You think a lot more about ancestors than I do. I'm a hundred percent American, I am; though I do come from the opposite side of the Continent, 3000 miles from the Hub. And anyone who says I'm not had better look out! If I had been a few years older I'd have been a war-veteran too, with a brass star to make me feel smart. Or maybe I'd have been a dead hero, with a medal!"

Tante hastened to soothe Dick's troubled

spirit, saying that Hugh was only joking when he spoke of the hyphen. For nearly everybody in this country has some foreign blood in his veins, of which he ought to be proud, unless it makes him the less American in loyalty. Then to change the subject Tante pointed out in the quilt the colors that might represent Poland with its gifts of music; the blue and white of Greece, with its tradition of beauty. In one square she saw the faith of the Jews, loyal to what they held true and pure; in another was Armenian patience and skill of hand. This purple suggested the heather of Scotland, thrift and grit and honesty on which America had builded firm structures. A bright pink square she declared must be from Bohemia, the home of fairytales. And so on. What would America do without all these gifts from the older lands?

“This looks like a green English meadow,” said Cicely picking out a vivid square.

“What are *we*, Mother?” asked Nancy presently, “we who are just Yankees and nothing else, since we left off being English one Fourth of July?”

"I think the tiny patch of greenish-grey represents us, Nancy," laughed her mother. "English with a difference. There isn't so conspicuously much of us in the patchwork, for the brighter colors crowd close about us. But you see a lot of squares have grey in the background, with polka dots and checks, stripes, figures, invisible brocade, and changeable effects. The Yankee spirit is pretty well scattered over the old quilt from border to border. We furnished a good deal of the thread that sewed the squares together, too."

"Well, my part of the story is done," finished Tante. "You have all helped to tell it. But the quilt is full of many more thrilling tales, I know."

"Dick is crazy to tell one," said Beverly mischievously.

"Well, I know a story that might be a western square of the quilt," said Dick modestly. "It's very short and it's very true. Father told it to me."

"Let's hear it, Dick," said Tante. And looking sly, Dick began.

"Well, you know my father's grandfather

and grandmother started out West from New England early in the game. I guess they got tired of hearing Hugh's great-grandfather tell about the doings of *his* great-grandfather who came over in the *Mayflower*! Well, they traveled the way the pioneers did, in a prairie schooner, you know—a big wagon drawn by oxen, with all their furniture and ploughs and pigs and chickens aboard; besides a lot of kids. That's how they went all the way across the country; because there weren't any railroads, of course. They had a terrible time. There were wolves and Indians, and floods on the great rivers. One time the food gave out. And they couldn't find water for days. Some of them were taken sick with a fever, and the littlest baby died. They buried him out in the middle of the prairie, and nobody knows where his grave is to this day. But I think it was somewhere near Chicago, Anne."

"Well?" said Nancy. "Is that all the story?"

"Isn't that enough?" asked Dick pretending

to be hurt. "It's the history of my patriotic ancestors."

"But what's the point?" asked Victor poking Reddy in the ribs.

"The point is," said Dick, getting to his feet ready to make a hasty retreat to his tent—"that I am descended from that little kid who died!"

The uproar that followed this anti-climax ended the story-telling for the evening. Nelly Sackett refused to let Reddy go home with her after such a fake ending to a real story. Instead it was Victor who had that honor, and the two departed under one umbrella to the tune of "*Seeing Nelly Home*," chorused by the Round Robin and derisive Dick.

## CHAPTER VII

### SAL SEGUIN

IT was a week before Sal Seguin kept her promise, or threat, to bring her baskets to Round Robin.

One hot afternoon Anne Poole had retired to the Fairy Ring, presumably to write letters. Beverly, who tried to give Anne full possession of the tent as often as she wished it, was swinging in the Gloucester hammock on the piazza, with Nancy and Gilda. They were all lazily watching Cicely who was arranging the flowers she had gathered that morning in her daily "prowl."

"You just ought to see the flowers in the South, Cicely," said Beverly. "The flower markets are the prettiest places! And our flowers are big, bright luscious ones; not like these pale little Yankee things. We have something blooming all the year round."

"And further south are waxy magnolias, and Cherokee roses and azaleas and trumpet-vines—oh, they are lovely!" said Nancy.

"But I think these twin-flowers are wonderful," said Cicely, holding up a spray of the creeper with a pair of tiny pink bells on the end. "We don't have this in England. I followed a delicious odor like heliotrope in the woods, and came upon a whole pink rug of this fairy-flower!"

"You are a real flower detective," said Nancy. "A botanical Sherlock Holmes."

"I love flowers!" cried Gilda clasping her hands. "Everybody of Belge loved ze flowers. In my city we had one great garden in ze middle of ze railroad station, under ze glass roof. And along ze canals of Bruges it was like one long garden, sliding down into ze wasser. But war spoiled all ze gardens, and ze people who made zem." Her face grew sad.

It was then that they spied the figure of the old Indian woman approaching, with a great bag slung over her shoulder and a basket under one arm.

"How?" she grunted, coming up to the piazza and setting down her burden. "You buy basket of old Sal? You promised." Gilda was nearest her.

"I haven't money," said Gilda. "I'm very poor."

"I haven't much, either," laughed Nancy. "But I'll see. And I'll call the other girls." She disappeared to the Fairy Ring.

"Let me see the baskets," said Beverly. "I like baskets. I am trying to make one for my mother, but it is very hard."

Sal looked sharply at her. "You Indian?" she asked. Beverly laughed.

"You haven't forgotten, have you?" she said. "Pocahontas lived more than two hundred years ago. I am her descendant; part Indian."

Sal grunted. "Part Indian, all same Indian. I give you baskets cheap." And she began to spread out her wares on the floor; many hued baskets, moccasins, birch-bark frames and knick-knacks.

"I will show you my basket," said Beverly running into the cabin and bringing out a

rather unsymmetrical shape which she was making of sweet-grass braid. Sal looked at it critically. "I show you better," she said. And with strong, deft fingers she taught Beverly how to shape and strengthen the basket with a bit of willow to hold it firm. Not contented with this, Sal began a new basket of sweet grass, and showed Beverly how to start right.

"Oh, thank you!" drawled Beverly, with the pretty manner that made everyone like her. "Now I must buy a nice basket of you, to show Mother how it really should be done." She had already chosen one of the more expensive baskets, with some bows and arrows for the Twins, and a little canoe for a small brother at home; when up came Nancy with Norma and Anne. The latter was in a rather bad humor.

"I didn't know you were dressing," Nancy was apologizing. "I thought you might like to get some baskets."

"I don't care about these baskets," grumbled Anne, glancing scornfully at the display on the piazza floor. "Idlewild is full of them. They are quite ordinary; ugly colors. These

traveling Indians never have anything decent. We can get a better choice in the store at home. Oh!"—she stooped and picked up a pair of moccasins in soft natural-grey sealskin—"These are really quite pretty. How much are they?"

The squaw eyed her sulkily, then snatched back the moccasins with what would have been very bad manners in one who knew better. "Not for sale!" she cried. "You live in the big house over there?" she pointed towards the south, towards Idlewild.

"Yes; my father Mr. Poole's house is there," assented Anne, wondering how the squaw knew.

"Land of my tribe!" muttered Sal Seguin. "Bad man stole it off my people. Your father, bad man, got it off them. No luck to him! He drove me off his place one time. Would not let his people buy!"

"Oh, I know," Anne murmured aside to Norma. "We were having a party last year. They said an Indian wanted to come in, but of course Father would not let her bother everybody."

"Your father bad man!" repeated Sal Seguin. "I not forget!"

Anne shrugged her shoulders airily. "Well, if that is all, I may as well go back and finish dressing. *Thank* you for calling me, Nancy!" and she walked away with a disagreeable swing.

"Humph!" grunted the old Indian with a malicious leer.

Each of the girls bought something. Even Gilda, whose pocket-money was very scarce indeed, purchased a tiny thimble-case for Tante. Norma departed with a photograph frame. Beverly had piled up quite a mound of souvenirs, saying they would make lovely Christmas presents. Sal packed the remaining things back in her sack. Last of all she took up the grey moccasins which Anne had liked. Then suddenly she turned to Beverly. "I give them to you," she said. "You speak kind. You real Indian; big heart! Not like daughter of bad man."

"Oh, thank you!" Beverly took the little moccasins. "They are very pretty," she said. "But I shall pay you."

"No pay. Humph!" The old woman waved her hand in the air with a grand gesture. "My fathers owned all the land beyond and behind, rich Chiefs. My father big Chief. I am the last. But the white people go on forever. And some are bad. Not you! Humph!"

Without another word she shouldered her pack and walked away. Down the path she disappeared. But presently through the branches of the trees they saw her paddling swiftly towards the South.

"I wonder where she lives?" mused Beverly. "Poor old thing!"

"Probably in the Indian Reservation at Oldtown," said Nancy.

"Wasn't she good to give me these moccasins?" said Beverly, stroking the silvery skins thoughtfully. "I suppose it wouldn't be fair to give them to Anne? But I can loan them to her while I'm here. I don't want them. We don't use such warm things in Virginia. They are meant for you cold-blooded Northerners."

"They have plenty of moccasins further

south, if you don't have them in Virginia, Beverly," said Nancy with a twinkle. "I've never been in your famous State, but I know Florida a little. And I had a funny time there once with a famous naturalist, about a moccasin. I don't think I ought to tell his name, he is so *very* famous!"

"Let's hear the story, and perhaps we can guess," said Beverly.

"Was it when you were at that wonderful house-party with Tante?" asked Cicely. "Tell us about it, Nancy."

"Yes," said Nancy chuckling. "You see, this famous naturalist was visiting there too; and the boys and girls loved to tease the old dear, who was awfully nice to us and didn't seem to mind our jokes a bit. He was just crazy to see a moccasin-snake—that's the very poisonous and very dangerous kind, you know. He wanted to put him in a book."

"Ugh!" shivered Gilda, much as old Sal might have done. "Put um in a book? What for zere, Nancy? I zink, in a trap is better!"

"Zey are safe in a book," laughed Nancy, imitating Gilda's accent. "But not when zey

crawl in ze grass, and squish in ze mud, and drop wiggling off ze trees!"

"Stop, Nancy!" shrieked the girls in chorus.

Nancy went on with the tale. "Uncle John had the worst luck! We boys and girls had all managed to see a moccasin somewhere. But though he got up early and kept awake late, hunting along the river and in under the live oaks, never a moccasin did he see.

"Well, we were kind children; and we put our heads together to get the old man what he wanted. He must see that moccasin! So we fixed up a nice little scene for him. I went up to my bedroom and got one of my Indian moccasins—maybe Sal Seguin had made it. Anyway, I had brought it from here. It was a New England moccasin. And it was brownish, with grey fur around its neck. After dinner Jack—he was one of the boys—took the thing down to the river bank and planted it under a bush, pinning it down with a forked stick, the way they catch snakes. Then two of us girls joined him carelessly. For we saw Uncle John sitting on the piazza worrying because he hadn't yet seen any moc-

casin. Pretty soon both of us began to scream. Ethel ran away as if she were frightened to death, and I raced up to the house calling 'Uncle John! Uncle John! Oh, do come quick and see the moccasin! Jack has him pinned down. He's quite safe. Quick!'

"You see, I didn't say a word that wasn't true. I was very careful about that. I knew how Uncle John hated nature-fakirs."

"Nancy, what is a nature-fakir?" asked Cicely, who often had to have American words translated for her.

"A nature-fakir? Why, he's somebody who mixes up fact and fancy without calling it a fairy-story," explained Nancy. "Uncle John says that isn't playing fair."

"I should call those unfairy stories," said Cicely. But the Club warned her with a howl that she was talking too much like Dick.

"Well," went on Nancy after this interruption had been punished, "when Uncle John heard that word *moccasin* he scampered down the walk to the riverbank faster than any old man you ever saw! And as he ran he cried

'Don't hurt him, Jack! Don't bruise him! I want to see that moccasin alive, just as he is.'

"'I've got him!' cried Jack. 'I'm holding him. I won't hurt him. But hurry up!'

"As Uncle John drew near he caught sight of the grey fur around the top of the moccasin, for he has sharp eyes. 'Gracious!' said he, 'That's the queerest-looking snake I ever saw!' Then as he came close he guessed what it was. 'It's a joke of that Nancy!' he shouted. 'Wait till I catch her, the good-for-nothing girl!' And he chased me all the way back to the house. But he couldn't catch me!" Nancy giggled at the memory of that chase.

"You ought to have sent him a pair of moccasins to keep his feet warm," suggested Beverly. I think you owed it to him, Nancy. It was mean to tease a great man so!"

"It would have been mean if he had minded," said Nancy. "But he *was* a great man every way; and he acted like a dear about it. He loved to tell this story on himself. I made a limerick about it. This is the way it goes:

*"A man with a hobby like Thoreau's  
Once hunted the highways and furrows  
For a moccasin snake.  
What he found was a fake  
More frequent in bureaus than burrows."*

"I know who it was!" shouted Beverly. "You've told now! *That* great man! How dared you do it, Nancy? I call it disrespectful!"

"Sh!" warned Nancy. "You mustn't say his name, if the others can't guess. Dear Uncle John! It must have been the rebellious southern air that led me into mischief," she answered Beverly's reproach.

"What are you girls quarreling about?" demanded Dick Reed, swinging himself onto the piazza. "What's the joke?"

"Only one of Nancy's foolish stories, in which she is always the heroine," drawled Beverly.

"And a poem, which I do not understand," said the bewildered Gilda.

"Nobody ever understands a poet, except

himself. Isn't that so, Nancy?" Dick teased her.

"Nancy's poetry is usually very easy to understand," said Cicely loyally. "But this has some kind of joke in it. They say we English aren't quick at jokes."

"I say," said Dick interrupting, "the old witch has been here, hasn't she?" He pointed at the pile of baskets at Beverly's feet. "I saw her down along the shore. She looked cross enough and was muttering at a great rate. I'd hate to have her down on me."

"She is down on Anne, then," said Beverly, and told Dick what had happened.

"Well, you couldn't blame Anne for feeling hurt at having her father called a bad man," Dick defended the absent lady, like a knight-errant. "Is he a bad man, Nancy?"

"How do I know?" said she. "I only know people don't like him here." And I think he is not very kind to Anne; though she won't say so."

"Sh! Here comes Anne!" whispered Beverly. "Goodness, what style!" Anne appeared from her tent, white-gowned, with

gloves on her hands, and a parasol over her head.

"Anne! I never saw a parasol in camp before!" exclaimed Nancy. "And as for gloves, —we use them only in the vegetable garden, shaking hands with the weeds."

Anne deigned no reply to this sally. "Norma said she would like to go with me to see Idlewild this afternoon," she said. "If anyone else wants to come, I should be glad to have you. I haven't the keys, but we can see a good deal outside the house."

"But why these clothes?" gasped Nancy.

"I haven't dressed for a week," said Anne. "I like to feel respectable once in a while. Khaki doesn't seem to belong at Idlewild. But of course, if *you* don't mind——"

"Cap'n Sackett has the keys," volunteered Dick. "You might call on him."

"Why, I'd like to go with you, Anne," said Cicely.

"So would I," agreed Nancy and Beverly.

"And I," added Gilda. "Here comes Norma."

Dick had an errand elsewhere. "I say!"

he whispered to Nancy, as the girls started for the walk along the shore, "the Golden Girl is going to get a surprise when she sees the palace of the king her father!"

"Why, Dick?" asked Nancy. But Reddy would not tell her.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IDLEWILD

THE first part of the way to Idlewild was unfamiliar to Anne. Apparently she had never walked far on the foot-path around her father's place. But as they approached the end of the mile walk she grew more animated. She remembered this point of rocks, that tree, this cliff above the surf. And when finally they came to the solid and substantial wall which Mr. Poole had built to separate his land from mere pasture, her spirits rose greatly.

They climbed the pretty stile, "quite English," as Cicely said. Then Anne became the Golden Girl once more, and began to show the others about with an air of importance.

"These are the steps leading down to the landing pier where Father usually keeps our yacht," she announced. "It's no use going

down now, for the *Day Dream* isn't in commission this summer. This is the path to the house. Isn't it pretty, and easy to walk on, it's so nicely gravelled? See these beautiful lawns! Father had the underbrush cleared away and all tidied up. It cost a great deal of money to start the sods, I heard him say. Grass doesn't like to grow on these rocks. But he made it!"

"I think the wild tangle that we have passed through is lovely," said Cicely. "The underbrush in New England is always a surprise to me. We have lawns and trimmed trees in England, of course. But we don't see anything wild like this."

"Well, anybody can have a wild place around here," said Anne loftily. "Father made this to be different. He copied somebody's place in Italy, I believe."

"Yes, here's an Italian pergola," said Norma. "And here's a brick terrace. That's Italian too."

There was a neglected tennis-court on the lawn in front of the garage; and a sunken garden, dried up and weedy. Anne looked

at the flower-beds in surprise and some mortification.

"Why, how badly the garden looks!" she exclaimed. "I thought Father always left somebody to take care of the place until we came again. But this looks as if nobody had been near it since last summer."

"It would take more than one man to keep this big place in order," said Cicely, who knew about such things.

"Oh, yes! Father employed three gardeners," said Anne, "and I don't know how many other men. I shall write him they aren't doing their duty. He will be very angry when he knows. He can't bear to see things out of order." Anne remembered more than one exhibition of her father's bad temper.

They were walking along the neat paths on top of the cliff, in front of the great house with its shuttered windows. The dead leaves of last fall lay brown on the unraked lawns. The wind had blown and torn the bushes here and there. Everything looked forlorn and unhappy. Anne grew more and more uneasy, even as she pointed out the elaborate arrange-

ments of the place; the big garage, the water tower, the lighting plant, the ice house, the stable where her pony had been kept. Anne did not know where he was now; perhaps in Canada.

Presently they came to a low house with wire pens adjacent. "This was the chicken house," said Anne. "We had pigeons and rabbits, too. But the hutches are all empty. Why, I wonder what has become of my white rabbit? I had a lovely one named Plon. Those dreadful servants have not taken care of him!"

"Perhaps your father did not intend to keep the place," suggested Norma. "It looks—well, finished."

"I'm sure he is coming down another summer," said Anne quickly. "It is only this year he had to go away on business, he said. It is the fault of the caretakers that the place looks so badly."

"Why, here is one leetle garden growing nicely as can be!" cried Gilda, who had been exploring by herself. "See, ze roses are all in ze bud!"

"It is my own little garden!" cried Anne, running to where Gilda stood. "I was afraid to visit it, for fear it would be dead. I have taken care of it all myself for ever so many summers, ever since I was a tiny tot. I never let anyone else weed it. And here is my herb garden behind it; but that does not look so well."

"I didn't know you ever worked, Anne," said Nancy innocently, "even in a garden."

"Work in a garden is only play," said Anne.

"We will remember that!" chorused the Round Robin. "Our vegetable garden never gets half enough attention," explained Nancy. "We'll introduce you to-morrow!" But Anne was bending over the little plot she called her garden, fingering the plants lovingly. Rose-bushes, mignonette, poppies, morning glories, sweet william, iris were all in bud, nicely weeded and trimmed. It was like a little oasis in a desert of desolation.

"I don't understand why this looks so well, when everything else is neglected," said Anne, greatly puzzled. "It certainly seems as if somebody had been tending it. Whoever it

is, I wish he had looked after my pets too. I'm afraid the poor things are all dead!"

"Maybe zey went away to be wild rabbits again," suggested Gilda sympathetically. "Zere are wild rabbits here. I saw one yesterday."

"Oh, did you? What was he like?" Anne was all eagerness. But it was a little brown bunny which Gilda had spied in the woods; not the big white Plon.

The girls went up on the piazza of the great house, trying to imagine how the interior would look when the windows and doors were open. "The hammocks always hung here," explained Anne. "And we had afternoon tea in this corner when the screens were up. This is the glassed-in breakfast room. You can't see it now because of the shutters. My rooms are above it, there. I have three all to myself, done in pale blue. Not much like camp, is it?" She smiled complacently. "Though I do like a tent, really," she confessed. "I shall ask father to build me a sleeping-porch next season."

"But don't you like trees close by, as we

have at Round Robin?" asked Nancy. "Mr. Poole must have cut off a lot of trees from this place. It seems bare to me."

"Yes," said Anne, "they cut off the trees to make a better view. I remember Father said so. I had forgotten it was quite so bare around the house." She looked about with new eyes, used to the sifted sun and shade of the intimate woods. "But what a wonderful thing it was that Father could turn this scraggy old New England pasture into such a foreign-looking place! Our friends who visited here called Father a magician."

"Plain American is good enough for me!" said Nancy. "I like it the way we have at Round Robin, cosy and simple."

"Well!" said Anne abruptly. "Let's not stay any longer. It makes me homesick to see the place so." She did indeed look disappointed and sad. The place was not so imposing as she had remembered. The girls were not so greatly impressed as she had hoped they would be.

"I'll tell you what!" suggested Nancy.

"Let's go and see Nelly's home. It's only a little way from here."

"All right!" the Club was ready. But Anne objected. "Oh! I'm too tired," she said. "I'd rather go right home."

"Oh, come on! It's such a little way," urged Nancy. "Cap'n Sackett wants to see you, I know, Anne. He is always talking about you, and how you used to come down often when you were a tiny tot."

"Why don't you care to go there any more?" asked Norma bluntly. "I should, if anybody wanted to see me so much."

"Oh, I don't know," Anne hesitated. "When I was little there seemed plenty of time. But now it is different. There is always so much going on at Idlewild—riding and driving and tennis and golf and company and yachting parties. But I did go down once every summer. Father made me."

"Well, to-day will make at least once this summer; and there's no time like the present," urged Nancy. "Nelly will never forgive us if she hears we were so near and did not go a little further to see her. But if you like, you

could wait here for us to pick you up on the way back, Anne."

"No, I will go too," said Anne, who had no mind to wait in the lonesomeness of Idlewild.

It was less than half a mile from Idlewild to the Cove, across Mr. Poole's well laid-out golf links. This too showed the lack of care. Already the trespassing weeds and lawless grasses were taking advantage of the generous July sun to riot and grow bold. The unkempt green was really no less beautiful; but it shocked Anne.

"I shall write Father to-night," she repeated. "It is dreadful!"

## CHAPTER IX

### NELLY SACKETT'S HOME

OVER another stile in the handsome wall clambered the Round Robin, and the girls found themselves in simple pasture-land once more. This was land that Captain Sackett would not sell to the rich man who had wanted to own and enclose for his sole pleasure the whole shore line from the Harbor to Camp Round Robin. The little path was almost lost in a tangle of blueberry bushes, juniper and sweet fern, where the wild roses were already in bud. But it led inevitably to the Cove at the head of which stood the old white house.

“What rough walking!” grumbled Anne, holding up her white skirt and picking her way between the briars. “Not much like Father’s nice path.”

“It is the old Indian trail,” said Nancy.

"Once it was all like this along the shore to our place and beyond, so Mother says. That was fifteen years ago, before any of us were born."

They spied Captain Sackett at a distance, hammering at some new lobster-pots on the beach in front of his house. His motor-boat was anchored a little way out in the water, and an old dory was drawn up on the beach. "Let's give the yell and surprise him," said Nancy.

"Heia! Hoia! Together! Round Robin!" hailed the Club; Anne alone standing silent. The old man straightened up, glanced about, then whirled his hat in the air, shouting in return:

"Hi there! Hi yourselves!"

All the girls but Anne raced up and danced around him in a merry ring, hand in hand.

"Glad to see ye, glad to see ye!" he cried. "Hello! There's another one comin' along. Why, it's Anne, ain't it? I thought so!" A glow of pleasure lit up his weather-beaten face as Anne walked slowly in his direction, and he advanced to take her not-too-ready

hand. "Why, how you've grown!" he said delightedly. "And how fine you're dressed! Comin' to make a call? Come right up to the house, the hull of ye, and see Aunt Polly. She and Nelly will be tickled to death to see ye all."

Nothing loth, the Club raced up the path to the house with its trim lilac bushes on either side of the door. Aunt Polly, plump and motherly, was waiting for them, with Nelly grinning over her shoulder.

"Come in! Come in!" said Aunt Polly hospitably. "I'm right glad to see you. I've been expecting you before this; but we know how fast the time goes with young folks who have so many nice things to do. Now, isn't it lucky I've just made some fresh cookies? Nelly, you run into the pantry and bring a pan of those cookies for the girls."

Off scampered Nelly. And the girls followed Aunt Polly through the spick-and-span kitchen into the sitting room. It was a dear little room. About the walls were old-fashioned pictures of ships and shipwrecks. On the mantel and what-nots were curious

shells and branches of coral, bits of carving and queer treasures that the Captain had picked up in his many voyages. Great bowls of nasturtiums stood on the table and on the top of the little parlor organ. There were shelves of books between the windows, and books lay about here and there. The walls looked pleased, like the walls of a room in which people read aloud.

"Here's Anne, Polly!" said Cap'n Sackett, calling his sister's attention to the last of the party who came in while the cookies were being passed. He spoke gravely, and Aunt Polly as gravely replied, turning to greet the girl.

"Why Anne! How do you do, my dear?" Nelly's mother gazed at Anne as the old man had done, with an eagerness that seemed to embarrass her. "Well, how you have grown this year!" continued Aunt Polly softly. "I suppose I ought to call you Miss Poole, now you are almost a young lady. But it doesn't come natural."

"It really doesn't matter what you call me," said Anne pertly. "I'm just a member of the

Round Robin this summer. Next summer it will be different, perhaps."

"What do you hear from your F——, from Mr. Poole?" Cap'n Sackett questioned Anne, while Polly and Nelly chattered to the others. Anne bit her lip; but she answered almost in spite of herself, it seemed.

"I haven't heard from Father since I came. He's a poor correspondent, Mother says."

"I guess I know that!" The old man shook his head understandingly. "I've known him nearly twenty years, Anne, for better, for worse. How's the baby?"

"He was well when I left Chicago," answered Anne shortly.

"Father's in Canady, ain't he?" inquired the Captain. "Not comin' down this summer, no?"

"No," said Anne. "And I shall write him about Idlewild. He will be very angry when he hears how badly the place looks."

The Captain glanced at Anne out of the corner of his eye. "Why, I've been up there now and again," he said slowly. "He told me to keep an eye on the place, and I have. I

thought it looked all right enough, for an empty place—kinder lonesome, of course; but you can't help that." He saw the girl wince at the word "lonesome."

"It looks horrid," insisted Anne.

"It's a big barn of a place," agreed the Captain. "Not so homy as this old shack of mine, now I've got Nelly and her mother here. Say, you used to like the Cove here pretty well once, Anne. Do you remember?"

Anne glanced around the simple room with the ornaments that she remembered very well from visits in her earliest childhood. "It seems a long time ago," she said. The old man sighed.

"A long time ago!" he repeated. "Though you aren't so very old, Anne. I wish you'd come oftener, like you used to do. Maybe you will this summer, now you are with these other folks? They are real neighborly."

Anne hastened to change the subject. "The only thing that looks right at Idlewild is my little garden," she said. "It really seems as if somebody had been taking care of it." The Captain grinned.

"Well, I kept an eye on that too," he confessed. "Nelly helped me weed it. We two couldn't manage the whole big garden, of course. But we thought the little one looked so lonesome there by itself, we had to fix it up. It does look good, don't it? Those mignonettes are comin' on fine!"

"Oh, thank you!" said Anne simply. "It was nice of Nelly to take that trouble for my garden."

Nelly came over to where Anne was sitting and smiled at her rather wistfully. "Don't you want to come out and see the rabbits?" she asked. "They are in a pen behind the house."

"Rabbits!" Anne exclaimed. "I love rabbits."

"You know these rabbits, too," smiled Nelly. "They belonged to Mr. Poole. Uncle saved them." The three were making their way around to the back of the house where the animals lived.

"When the critters were sold," explained the Captain rubbing his hands, "I just bought in these rabbits, as well as the chickens. I

thought it would please you, Anne, and I liked the little fellers, too. The big white one is right cute."

"Oh, that's Plon!" cried Anne, delighted. "You dear old thing! I am so glad you are safe!" She took the rabbit up in her arms and hugged him rapturously.

"He knows you, all right!" chuckled the Captain. "You can take him back with you, if you want to."

"Oh, no, I am afraid he would be lonesome," sighed Anne.

"Then you must come often to see him here," said Nelly Sackett eagerly.

"Yes. I will." Anne hugged the rabbit closer, while she smiled upon the old man and his niece for the first time that day.

"I wish I could have saved the pony for you too, Anne," said the Captain. "But he cost too much. I'm not rich, you know."

"The pony was growing old and cross," confided Anne. "I didn't love him as I do Plon. But why were the animals sold? I don't understand!"

The Captain shook his head. "Orders," he

said, "Mr. Poole's orders. His agent sold everything about the place, furniture and all."

"The furniture!" Anne stared. "Then the house is quite bare inside?"

The Captain nodded. The other girls who had been roaming about the house examining the Captain's treasures now came running out to ask questions. "Oh, Captain! What's this big tooth with pictures on it?" asked Beverly holding up an engraved ivory cone.

"That's a whale's tooth," said the Captain, "tattooed out in China. And that's a sword-fish's sword," he answered Gilda's question about the strange natural weapon she was carrying.

"Oh, won't you tell about this, please?" begged Norma, holding out a bottle in which was a tiny ship with all sails set. She had found it on the mantel-shelf among the other treasures.

"Yes, tell them about that ship, Eph," urged Aunt Polly who had followed them into the door-yard. "That is a good story."

"How did ze tall ship go into ze leetle bot-

tle?" asked Gilda in amazement. "I don't know!"

"Oh yes, Cap'n!" pleaded Nancy. "Do tell that story. Have you heard it, Anne?"

Anne shook her head. "I've heard a lot of the Captain's stories, but never that one," she said.

"Oh, I dunno about tellin' *that* story," protested the Captain. "It wa'n't anything."

"That was a copy of the ship he saved," interpolated Aunt Polly. "They had it made for him, those Portygees. Ain't it cute? I don't see how they ever got it into the bottle, as the little foreign girl says."

"Did he save a ship?" asked Anne with round eyes, hugging the rabbit.

"More than one!" chuckled Aunt Polly. "Ask anybody in this county. But that was the best one. Eph was a real hero, everybody says. He's a real hero still, for that matter, isn't he, Nelly? Once a hero, always a hero, that's what I say!"

"Oh nonsense, Polly!" exclaimed Cap'n Sackett testily. "You hadn't ought to talk such foolishness to these girls. Now young

Victor Lanfranc, down to your camp, he is a real hero. He got wounded 'way up in the air over the German lines, that young Frenchy did. He bombed the factory where they made their wicked guns; and he got a medal for it. I admire that lad! I never got nothin' but a salt water duckin'. He! He!" Captain Sackett gave a merry little chuckle.

"You ought to have had a medal," insisted Aunt Polly.

"Oh, you must tell us about it!" begged the girls in chorus. "Heia! Hoia!"

"Now, please begin," commanded Nancy.

They all sat down on the grass, Anne still clasping Plon in her arms, and listened breathless to the Captain's story, which he told while he whittled at a wooden peg.

## CHAPTER X

### A REAL HERO

“**I** DON’T think it’s worth tellin’,” protested the Captain again. But as they would not take no for an answer, he began in his droll way.

“It happened before any of you were born,” said he, “when I was captain of a little schooner named *The Anna*. That was my wife’s name, and my little daughter’s after her. I had just been married, and was home for a little vacation. That summer there was a lot of terrible storms off this coast. If you’ve ever seen a storm on this bay, girls, you can guess what it’s like in the winter. Our rocks are cruel hard and sly. They hide under the waves there like giants’ teeth ready to chew up the little boats.

“Well, there was a little schooner from

Portygal that had got off her course, and the storm blew her in here. She beat in to what looked like a safe harbor out of the storm. But out there on the Washers she struck the reef, hard. In a jiffy the schooner was all stove up into kindlin's; but the men managed to cling to a spar and drifted onto what seemed to them a little island. They climbed up into what looked like safety, though it was mighty damp, for it was low tide at the time. But that island is one of the Washers, and is covered at high tide with ten foot of roarin' green water. They was all pretty nigh drownded already; and while they clung to the rocks two more of the men were swept away by big waves. They didn't guess it, but full tide was bound to get 'em all.

"Now, I was lookin' out of this front window with my spyglass, same as I always did in a storm, when I was ashore. And I sighted through the rain somethin' black out on the Washers. 'Gorry! It's men!' I says to Anna. 'There's men out on the Washers! Must have been a wreck. Must try to get 'em off in the double-quick. 'Course, they *had* to be got

off," the Captain paused, already on the defence.

"That was just like Eph!" Aunt Polly interrupted. "Somebody had to do it; so he did. He never waited for 'George' or anybody else to do it. He tried to get some fellers to go out with him; but they said No good in that storm. It was sure drowning. They told him he would have to give it up. But Eph he would go! Not even Anna could keep him, and they just married! She told me afterwards how she begged and prayed him to stay for her sake. But he said for her sake he coudn't let 'em drown; she'd never forget it if he did. Eph's so obstinate!" Aunt Polly gazed at the Captain with affectionate admiration. He pretended to be angry at her interruption.

"You let me tell this here story, will ye?" he growled, whittling with redoubled vigor. "Well, you see, as Polly says, somebody had to go out and get those men. Of course I went. Hadn't I been the first one to see their danger? The Lord had showed 'em to me. Ye can't wish His job onto anyone else. Ye must take

it yourself, when He hands it to ye. That is all there is to it.

“Well, I put the old dory into the surf; I kinder thought she’d see me through. The fellers helped me—that was tough work! I thought we’d never get over the rollers. But well—I did get out to the rocks somehow, and somehow I brought back four of the men—four Portygees who couldn’t speak a word of English. Tickledest men I ever saw! For I didn’t get to ’em a mite too soon. The waves were creepin’ mighty close. Two of the poor chaps had been washed off already. I always felt kind of guilty about those two. Seems as if I had hurried a little more; if I hadn’t stopped to put on my sou’wester and boots, I might have saved ’em all. Those two drownded men kind of ha’nt me, sometimes.”

“The idea!” again interpolated Aunt Polly. “It was a sheer miracle you saved any of them and got back alive. Everybody said so.”

The Captain calmly ignored her remark and went on with a chuckle. “You oughter seen this shore the next few days! The Portygee schooner was freighted with oranges

and lemons and pineapples and olives and oil,—queer things like that. The rocks were covered with yaller splotches and dabs, like paint the artist-folks daub all over the cliffs in the summer time. I guess they get mad with their paint-boxes and tip 'em over out of spite! Well, the waves were all shiny with oil, and we had pies for dinner and lemonade, till we were sick of 'em. Anna and I had our first taste of olives. I'll never forget what a face she made at the queer flavor of 'em! It was funny to hear the Portygees tryin' to thank us in their lingo and make us a present of all the stuff we could save from the sea. They were so grateful."

"I should think they might have been!" cried Norma enthusiastically. "Why, you'd risked your life for them, like a story-book hero!"

"They lived on Eph for a week," added Aunt Polly. "I don't see where he stowed them all. Foreigners too! I guess he was good to them; just as good as if they had been American."

"Well, why shouldn't I be?" asked the Cap-

tain. "They were humans, weren't they? Everybody's neighbors in this world. For all I know, those Portygees are Americans now. Two of 'em said they were goin' to settle in the West some day."

"Oh, Captain! I am so proud of you!" Beverly's eyes shone.

"Nonsense! It wa'n't anything, I tell ye!" blustered Cap'n Sackett, turning red. "It was about that boat in the bottle you wanted to hear? Well it is kinder cute, ain't it? One of the Portygee sailors sent it to me after he got back to his own land. He carved the little boat himself, and made all the sails and riggin'. But I dunno how ever he got it into that little narrow-necked bottle. It beats me! Those furriners are cuter than we about some things."

"Eph was about dead when they all got ashore," Aunt Polly added to the story. "He never was so husky afterwards. Anna wrote me she had to rub him half the night to get him limbered up. But he kept telling her to look after the poor foreign sailors, who couldn't speak a word of English. Eph

seemed to think that was the pitifulest part of it all."

"Wal, I guess it was!" drawled the Captain. "Everybody ought to learn to talk English—eh, Gilda?"

The girls listened open-mouthed to the story which none of them had ever heard before. It was not an unusual tale, perhaps; they may have read something like it. But to think that this was *true*, and that it had happened right out on these very rocks which they could see this minute, and that this old man, their friend, was the real hero of it! Anne, sitting with the rabbit in her lap, soon forgot even Plon. As the story went on her cheeks grew red and her eyes grew bright. It seemed as if she were acting out the story, too. When Cap'n Sackett stopped abruptly, she gave a gasp.

"Oh!" she cried. "How splendid! What next?"

The Captain glanced at her as if he were more pleased by this word than by anything else. Was it just because she was the Golden Girl? That did not seem like Cap'n Sackett.

"You like to hear about the sea, don't ye, Anne?" he said gently. "Used to when ye were a little kid. You ask 'what next?' Why, there wasn't any 'next' to speak of. I just went on sailin', till I got sick. Then I lay-to a spell, here in the house my father built. He was a captain too; and so were his father and grandfather before him. But when a man gets rheumatiz he can't command a ship any more. Too much depends on the captain. But I could ketch fish off and on. That's what I did for a good many years before we had motor-boats to make it easier. It hasn't been a kid-glove life, Anne. But I have kinder liked it."

"What a pity you didn't have a lot of little boys and girls to tell stories to!" exclaimed Norma with warm enthusiasm. "You make it so interesting." The Captain's face clouded.

"Ain't it a pity?" he said. "I did have one little girl named Anna." He gulped and then said with a gentle smile, "And now there's Nelly," he laid his hand affectionately on his niece's red curls.

"He's been so good to us," said Aunt Polly.

"After Nelly's father died three years ago, he brought Nelly and me right home and treated us as if we were his own."

"Well, ain't ye my own?" chuckled Cap'n Sackett. "My own brother's wife and child. I dunno how I ever got along without ye. You make this a home once more." Thereupon Aunt Polly scuttled away into the next room, wiping her eyes on a corner of her apron.

"Let's go home by the road; it's shorter," suggested Nancy, when they had said good-bye. "We don't need to go through Mr. Poole's place at all. He mightn't like us to trespass," she smiled mischievously at Anne.

"Yes. Let's go by the road," agreed Anne. "I don't want to see Idlewild again this summer. It is too lonesome."

"I suppose I oughtn't to have said that about the Captain's children," said Norma contritely. "Is there something very sad about it, Nancy? I could have cut out my tongue as soon as I had spoken. I'm always saying the wrong thing!"

"Mamma says the Captain has had the sad-

dest life," answered Nancy, "though he is so cheerful, the most popular man in the township. All his neighbors are always coming to him with their troubles. You see, his daughter and her husband were killed in an automobile accident. It nearly broke his heart, for he worshiped Anna. Then, the very next spring, his own wife died. His brother and Aunt Polly were living twenty miles away at the time. He went on a long voyage; but that was the last. He must have been all alone for years. Wasn't it sad?"

"He is an old dear!" declared Beverly. "He seems to admire you, Anne. You ought to be mighty pleased about it."

"Yes, I'm jealous!" cried Norma. "He will never like me again."

"Don't be silly," said Anne stiffly, and she walked on ahead.

"He is wonderful!" was Cicely's comment. "He seems like the kind of big brave men who founded America. I'm glad they are not all in books. Nelly ought to be proud of her uncle."

"I guess she is," said Nancy. "Only it's not the Yankee way to show it. I know."

Anne walked on in silence; then she said rather suddenly. "It's queer! When he told that story, I felt as if I had been there! It must be wonderful to be a sailor. If I were a man, that's what I'd like to be." This sounded so little like the Golden Girl that they all stared, then began to laugh.

"It's because your father is a fancy yachtsman," said Nancy.

Anne looked at her over her shoulder. "That isn't the same thing, as you very well know!" she declared. "Yachting is only a game. You don't have to be brave to do that kind of thing. Somebody else does it for you. Captain Sackett is different! He is the first real hero I ever met; but he is just a common man."

"Mother says the biggest people in the world have seemed simple men," said Nancy gravely. "Even Abraham Lincoln. Or even the Greatest One of all."

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EAGLE'S NEST

**A**FORTNIGHT went by, and "the Tenderfeet," as Dick called the newer campers, were growing used to camp ways which had seemed queer and hard to some of them at first. In all that time Anne received no letter from her father. But one day Tante did. She did not tell Anne this, but put the letter in her apron pocket and carried it to her favorite spot in the woods to read by herself.

The letter was dated from a place in Canada, and was signed by Mr. Poole. There were some mysterious words among the plain business matters mentioned in the letter. Mr. Poole was writing about the money to be paid for Anne's summer expenses at the camp. "It is a crisis with me," he wrote. "You'll under-

stand before long, I guess. I'll be glad if you will keep Anne as long as you can; then I'll have to do something, I don't know what. I can't write to her, and my wife is all bound up in our little baby, of course. You can't expect much of her. She isn't very strong, and of course Baby has first claim on us. That word '*claim*' makes me sick anyway! I've got to harden my heart to everybody. You'll soon know what I mean."

"What can the man mean?" thought Tante, fingering this strange letter. "Harden his heart! I should say it must be hard as granite already! Poor little Anne. She is worrying because she does not hear from him. But letters like this don't make one happy. We must help her to have as good a time as possible this summer."

Tante went straight to the Fairy Ring where Anne was making up a second cot bed, her own being already properly finished. Her eyes were red. And when Tante appeared in the tent opening Anne hastily brushed a tear with her khaki sleeve. "I'm making Beverly's bed," she said, trying to appear careless. "She

made mine yesterday, without my asking her. Beverly is very nice."

"I hear you girls are going for a climb to-day," said Tante smiling approval. "It's a lovely day for it, and the Eagle's Nest is not very far."

"I can climb all right," said Anne. "But I've got letters to write. Tante, why do you suppose I don't hear from my father?" she cried suddenly, showing what the trouble was that made her eyes red and the tears ready to start.

"There might be many reasons," said Tante soothingly. "But whatever they are, you mustn't worry. You must get all the sunshine you can out of this golden summer. You had better go with the girls on this nice trip."

"Something has happened to Father," said Anne uneasily. "I have suspected for some time that things weren't going right. He seems so different. It isn't like him to sell the animals, even Plon and the old pony."

"You must be a brave girl," said Tante, putting her arms around Anne's shoulders. "If anything happens, we will all stand by, Anne."

Friends do help when they get together as we try to do at Round Robin."

"The girls are all right," said Anne. "If you say so, I will go with them. And I should like to see an eagle's nest."

"That's right! I have put up a luncheon for you already," said Tante. "I was sure you would go."

Anne straightened her shoulders and hurried away to get ready for the climb. Presently she joined the brown group in broad hats and with business-like knapsacks strapped to their shoulders, who were gathered at the back of the camp. The girls were going alone this once. For Hugh and Victor were away for a three-days' camping trip in the deep woods, and Dick, excused from studies for that time, was acting as Camp Protector in their absence.

"Be sure you keep together and follow your leader," Tante charged them as she waved good-bye.

"Who is the leader?" asked Anne of Beverly Peyton, who was waiting for her at the end

of the line. "Why, Nelly Sackett, of course. She knows the way better than anybody."

"I didn't know she was going!" said Anne, hanging back. She felt not unfriendly to Nelly. But she could not get used to the idea of this freckled country girl as a leader in *her Club*. Anne liked to be a leader herself, or to choose whom she would follow.

"Tante would not let us go without Nelly," said Beverly. "None of the others have been over the trail this season, not even Nancy. But Tante said we might go if we would be very careful."

"Of course," said Anne, reluctantly following in Beverly's footsteps. She was ashamed to explain how she felt, and why she hated to be at the end of the procession that Nelly led.

The eagle's nest was on the small mountain that lay at the back of the camp, about two miles distant. The nest was a secret that Captain Sackett had discovered years before, when he was a little boy. How long it had been there before his time nobody knew. But every year two old eagles came to the nest,

and used it for a nursery, far above the sea and beyond the homes of men; shut in by thick woods and the bold rocks of the mountain. This was just the time when Captain Sackett had seen a baby eagle there last year; and the Club was eager to visit the nest now, while the 'Veterans' were away, hoping to have something to tell them on their return. For it is not many persons who have seen an eagle on its nest.

It was a wild walk through thick woods with no road; only a narrow trail made in years past by wood-cutters, and since used by campers and summer people at long intervals. For Captain Sackett had kept his secret well, telling only those friends who could be trusted not to hurt or harry the faithful eagles' well-hidden nursery.

The trail followed at first the bed of a brook. It was an easy climb, under shady trees, and the girls went merrily without stopping to rest. Then, where a cairn of brook-pebbles marked a change of direction, Nelly led them at right angles along a narrow foot-path between low bushes and under trees that

had not been trimmed for years. This was the path to the nest. The trees were marked by old "blazes" or notches made to show the path to keen eyes, and the girls had fun in trying to see who would be the first to spy each blaze. Nelly was ahead of the others, and had this advantage. But Cicely's eyes were quick; perhaps because she had studied flowers closely and also because she liked to draw and sketch out of doors, as so many English girls do.

It was very exciting to lose the trail for a moment, then to find it again plainly marked some yards ahead, when you thought it gone forever. It seemed like a live thing, playing at hide and seek with them. But the girls knew that the only safe way was for the last girl in line to stay close by the last blaze discovered, until the leader should reach the next blaze. That is an old woods' rule. And the second rule is *Keep Together*—which was also the Club motto.

By and by the path ceased to climb. They had come out upon flat ground covered with very tall old spruce trees, many of them

draped with grey moss, like bearded giants. Beverly and Anne were chatting at the end of the line, and the others were a bit ahead, when Nelly turned and signed to them to be quiet. "*Sh!*" she cautioned with her finger on her lip. "**W**e mustn't talk now!" Anne was annoyed.

"Why can't I talk?" said she. "She needn't give orders, as if she were a captain herself!" And she went on talking. But the others all looked back and frowned "*Sh!*"

"We are coming near the nest, I reckon!" explained Beverly in a whisper. "Nelly says she hears something. We don't want to frighten the eagles away if they are there." At this Anne was sulkily silent. There seemed nothing to reply.

They tiptoed through the woods, trying not to snap the underbrush. Climbing over a fallen old log, Gilda was unlucky enough to lose her balance and fall head foremost with a crash. "*Sh!*" warned the whole Club in a gigantic whisper. And it sounded so funny as a chorus that they all began to shake with laughter they must not express aloud. Gilda

picked herself up unhurt, and they crept on. Finally Nelly halted the procession and they gathered about her to hear what she had to say.

"The nest is up in the top of that great tall pine tree there on the edge of the swamp," she whispered. "Uncle says it has been there perhaps a hundred years. And that maybe the same pair of eagles have been here ever since he was a boy. Eagles never desert their mates, and they are the most devoted mothers and fathers. Listen! Do you hear that high little pipe? That's an eagle now."

It did not seem possible that the shrill, harsh sound could be the voice of the king of birds!

"There is the nest," whispered Nelly, pointing. "See! There is something up there!" A great platform of coarse twigs projected from a crotch near the top of the huge pine tree. Below the trunk was bare. While they peered in turn through the bird-glasses that Norma had brought, they could make out two huge bird-shaped objects silhouetted against the sky, perched on top of this rude nest. They

were the children of the bald-headed eagle. The squawking little monsters were begging for food with greedy bills, as undignified as young robins.

"Where do you suppose the old birds are?" asked Norma.

"Gone to get dinner for the family, probably," answered Nelly. "They may be fishing for themselves down by the sea, or stealing from the fish-hawks, like robbers. I daresay they are miles away. Their great wings are so strong."

"I wish I could see those babies better," said Nancy discontentedly. "It's hard to tell where the birds leave off and the nest begins. I am going to climb up in this tall spruce and see them nearer." The spruce was about twenty feet from the pine and half as tall.

"Oh, don't try it, Nancy!" begged Nelly Sackett.

"No, I wouldn't," added Norma. "The old birds might come. It's too hard a climb for a girl."

That was enough. "Pooh!" said Nancy beginning to mount. "I can climb as well as

any boy!" And indeed she scaled the tree like a young monkey.

"Tante told us to keep together," protested Nelly Sackett. "Please, Nancy!" But Nancy retorted:

"She meant keep together *horizontally*. This is *vertically!* That's different!" She was half way up the tree, pulling herself from crotch to crotch, and grumbling at the spruce gum with which the tree was too generously supplied. "I'm all sticky, but I can see finely now!" she cried. "There are two babies, and their heads are rusty brown. Oh, they are *plain!*"

They could see Nancy clinging far up in the tree; and the little eagles seemed also to spy her. For they set up a horrible squawking. Presently the girls heard another sound. A high piping scream far away, but growing louder.

"The old eagles are coming!" cried Nelly Sackett. "Hurry up, Nancy! Come down!"

You cannot hurry very fast coming down from a high tree. Nancy began to descend. But before she had gone very far a great

shadow came between her and the sun. Mighty wings with a stretch of at least seven feet from tip to tip seemed to Nancy like the pinions of the Roc in the Arabian Nights. There were two of the birds, and they were circling round her high up in the air, screaming frightfully. The old eagles had come to defend their babies!

Nancy suddenly remembered the stories she had read about the fierceness of eagles when their young are in danger. She knew they would try to peck her eyes, or beat her with their great wings.

"Keep in the thick part of the tree, Nancy!" called out Nelly. "They can't get at you there."

Nancy clung close to the trunk, and gradually let herself slip down to the ground where the other girls were cowering, very white and anxious. The eagles could not get at them there, though they still circled screaming overhead. The trees grew too thickly; the great birds would not venture down among them where those enormous wings might be entangled in the branches. Eagles have to

fight in the open; which is the only hope of the small, weak creatures they would otherwise make their prey.

"Oh Nancy!" Cicely grabbed her cousin with trembling hands. "I was so frightened!"

"It was a silly thing to do," Nancy confessed rather shamefacedly. "Mother will certainly have the right to scold me. Since I wouldn't keep together, I was very nearly taken apart! I'll not forget our motto in a hurry, girls!"

"Let's get away from here," suggested Beverly. And the others were eager to do as she said. Tripping and breathless they made their way through the woods back to the main path up the mountain. The old eagles followed them for some distance, high up above the trees, screaming their anger at the meddling humans. But finally they gave up the pursuit, deciding perhaps to go back and hear what their youngsters had to tell about it. The girls breathed more freely when the sound of those most unregal voices ceased screaming overhead. But they did not pause for rest or for lunch, till they had the





swamp and another small mountain between them and the eagle's nest; till, in fact, they were on top of the highest mountain, where they chose a nice shady spot out of the wind and sank down to eat and enjoy the view.

They were pretty tired, exhausted with excitement and extremely hungry. They did not talk much till it was time to start down the mountain again.

## CHAPTER XII

### LOST

“**I**T will be easy going down,” said Nelly Sackett, when they were rested and ready. “There are several trails down from the top in different directions. But I told Tante we would return the way we came, because that is the quickest way to Round Robin.”

They started off at a brisk pace. “If anyone gets tired, sing out, and we will stop for a rest,” Nelly shouted over her shoulder. “But all keep together.”

“All right!” chorused the Club. But who wants to be the first to cry “tired”? The foremost girls started to skip and hop down the path, and after that they found it hard to go slowly, though their knees began to feel queer kinks. Again Anne brought up the rear; this time because she was really tired. The others

were so busy watching their own rollicking steps, laughing and squealing, that no one noticed how Anne was gradually falling further and further behind.

"I don't need to ask Nelly Sackett's permission to rest," Anne said to herself sulkily. She had started out of sorts, and had been growing no less so as the day grew long. "The others can go on a bit," she thought. "I'm tired of hearing their voices. I'll catch up when I get ready, for it's easy walking on this path."

Anne was not timid about being alone in the woods, as Beverly was. She sat down under a great pine tree and took off her hat, to cool her hot forehead. It was quiet and peaceful in the shade. Around a bend in the path she saw Beverly's knapsack disappear, as she cantered after the other girls. Anne breathed a sigh of relief. Somewhere in the woods a hermit thrush began to sing his flute-like song; always in three parts. Anne listened eagerly. She had never heard one so near before, though Norma had taught her the song. She rested some time, till the thrush stopped singing, then she felt quite ready to

start on again. She picked herself up with a triumphant feeling that she had done as she pleased, with nobody's leave.

"It's easy enough to follow a blazed trail," mused Anne out loud. It seemed natural to talk out loud in the woods, when one was alone. "I don't see why they make such a fuss about being 'careful.' I remember these trees perfectly. I remember everything!"

The blazes on the trees were fresh and plain along here. But presently Anne came to a place where a great pine had fallen under the storms of the previous hard winter, and lay right across the path. Another had crashed into a grove of spruces and had taken them all down with it to ruin. "I remember we went out of the way around this," said Anne. She made a wide detour, and looking carefully, came again upon blazes, quite conspicuous ones. She had lost time in rediscovering the path. "I see why it is better to keep together, on a long walk," she said to herself. "A lot of eyes can spy blazes quicker. I'll have to hurry to catch up with the rest, unless

they stop. I think they will stop for me." She hurried on a little faster.

"I wonder if paths always look so different coming down?" thought Anne a little later. Again she came to a blind part of the trail. A perfect maze of fallen trees had wiped out every sign of a path. And a great moss-covered boulder stood square in the way. "I certainly never saw that rock before! We should have spoken of it," said Anne dubiously. "I don't see any blazes—oh yes, there is one. But it looks very old and faint, not like those we followed this morning. There's another! Can I be on the right path? They did not say there was another branching off."

This was a very wriggling narrow path indeed, and Anne could not help seeing that it was different from the one she remembered. She began to feel rather nervous, and she remembered with a pang Tante's last words to the Club—"Above all, *keep together*. *Together* is a safe motto, especially in the woods." No one answered her repeated calls.

The path grew vaguer and vaguer. Sometimes the blazes seemed quite obliterated.

Sometimes there seemed groups of them marking paths that led in opposite ways. Anne had to choose as best she could what seemed the right general direction.

Finally she came out quite abruptly into a sort of clearing, where the blazes converged in a hopeless muddle. Probably it was the site of an old wood-cutters' camp, and these were the paths the men had made to get lumber, leading nowhere but to the place where some big tree had stood. Anne had no idea which way to go next. She was indeed lost. She shouted, but no one answered. Her voice did not seem to carry far; only the twittering of frightened birds and the mocking caw of an old black crow answered her.

Anne sat down, breathless, to think; and for the first time she was really frightened. Once she fancied she heard a far-off shout, that might be the Club yell. But it seemed to come from the wrong direction; and not hearing it again, in answer to hers, she concluded she had been mistaken.

Suddenly she heard the sharp crack of a rifle somewhere in the woods beyond her.

There was no mistaking that sound. "Somebody is hunting!" she thought. "Suppose he should shoot me by mistake!" She jumped to her feet and hurried forward again, away from the sound of the shot.

Then she discovered all of a sudden that she was on a broad, well-marked trail leading down the mountain. This was encouraging, for she could walk faster now. But she stopped abruptly in a few moments. She had spied something through the trees. It was a hut in the woods beside the trail; a hut away off in this lonely spot on the side of a mountain that was supposed to be uninhabited!

It was a shiftless low shack of rough logs covered with tar-paper. From a tiny chimney a thin coil of smoke was rising. About the hut was a disorderly litter of barrels and boxes and earthen jugs. A wheelbarrow stood by the door. Probably there was someone in the house who could tell her which way to go home. But Anne had no desire to investigate the owner of this lonely, untidy place. Her one thought was to get away as soon as possible.

Down the path she ran wildly, stumbling and sometimes falling, as the roots of the ground-pine and the rolling pebbles seemed trying to trip her. The path made a continuous curve. Soon Anne had lost all account of direction, as well as of time. When she had run some distance and was thoroughly out of breath, she made up her mind that she must stop to rest. Then she saw that she was coming out of the thick woods. Suddenly, the path made a jump out onto a beach, a tiny crescent of pebbly sand, hidden from the open sea by a rocky island close to shore, and by other reefs beyond. Anne stepped on to the pebbles and looked about quite dazed. There was nothing to tell where she was or in which direction was home. There was nothing familiar on land or sea.

Presently Anne spied a small motor-boat anchored in the tiny harbor. And at the same moment she became aware that she was not alone in the cove. A man was stooping over some boxes which he had evidently just brought ashore. They lay at the entrance of what looked like a cave in the cliff. The man

glanced up over his shoulder at the sound of Anne's feet on the pebbles. Then he sprang erect with a jerk, like a jumping-jack.

"Hello!" he cried in gruff surprise that was not pleasure. "Where'd *you* come from?"

He was a tall rough-looking man in fisherman's clothes and boots and a tarpaulin hat. Around his throat was a knotted red handkerchief, and he looked rather like a pirate. What with the cave and the piles of boxes and barrels at the entrance, Anne thought of Dick's favorite story of pirate treasure; and for a moment she imagined she was dreaming. But the man recalled her, repeating his question impatiently and taking a step towards her.

"I say, who are you and where'd you come from?" When the man frowned he had a still more dangerous look.

Anne's heart sank. Beverly would probably have fainted away. "I'm lost, I guess," she said faintly. "We went up on the mountain from our camp near the Harbor, and I got separated from the others. Will you please tell me how to get home?"

"Home?" echoed the man, eyeing her

sharply. "Why, the Harbor's miles from here!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Anne in despair. "What shall I do?"

"You never kin walk it," said the man gruffly. "I don't see how you got here. Down the mount-ing, eh? H'm! Some journey!"

"Yes!" assented Anne. "Miles!"

The man had a sudden idea. "Did ye see anything in the woods as ye come along?" Anne shook her head. "I heard a shot," she said, "that was what frightened me, so I ran. Perhaps it was you?" she had spied a rifle lying on the beach beside the stranger.

"Mebbe," said the man shortly. "Shootin' fish. No luck, though. Didn't see anything else in the woods, did ye?"

"I saw a house that looked as if somebody was in it," said Anne truthfully. "Smoke was coming out of the chimney."

"Fergit it!" said the man sharply. "Smoke? You was dreamin'. Or else it's ha'nted. Yes, that's it; that house is ha'nted! Old hermit lived there once. Nobody remembers it; but

it's so. I wouldn't speak of it to nobody, if I was you. Bad luck!"

Anne thought he talked strangely, and wondered if she had a crazy man to deal with. But his next words reassured her. "I s'pose I could take ye a piece of the way home in my boat," he said rather dubiously. "Ye got to get away somehow."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Anne gratefully. "They will be so worried about me at Camp." He rowed her out to the boat in a light dory that served as his tender. "Jump in," he said roughly, taking her by the arm to steady her.

"Where shall I sit?" she asked, looking around the boat, for there was no seat of any kind. Evidently this was no passenger-boat. "Set right down in the bottom," commanded the man. And though it neither looked nor smelled clean, Anne obeyed the look in the man's eye. From where she crouched she could see nothing but blue sky. The stranger steered standing. His back was towards her and his hat hid his face completely. He spoke no word as the boat chugged along into what seemed to Anne the middle of the ocean, so

entirely was all sight of land hidden from her. Once she started to climb to her feet, to see where they were going.

“Set down!” roared the man, who seemed to have eyes in the back of his head. And after that Anne kept still. It seemed to her that the boat threaded a very winding course; but she could not really tell. Indeed, all water-courses had to be more or less crooked in this part of the world, on account of the many reefs and islands.

They went for a long time, perhaps fifteen minutes, before the man spoke to Anne. “Ye’ve made me a lot of trouble,” he said crossly. “Don’t do it again!”

“Indeed I won’t,” said Anne fervently. “I’m sorry.”

“Ye’d better keep yer mouth shut about what ye’ve seen to-day,” he shot out the words with a growl, “or ye’ll be sorry! I’m goin’ to set you ashore pretty soon, not far from yer Camp. Ye’ll have about half a mile to walk; but that ain’t bad for a stocky miss like you.”

“Thank you,” said Anne meekly.

The shadows were slanting low in the west

when the pilot made a sharp turn and the boat entered the still waters of a cove. The engine stopped and they drifted. "Ye may git yer feet a bit wet," said the man; "but I hope ye're no molly-coddle, if ye're a camper. Here, git up!" Anne climbed to her feet, rather numb and stiff, and looked around. The place seemed strange, yet curiously familiar. She could not tell what was the matter.

"Which way do I go?" she asked bewildered, when she was ashore.

The man laughed but seemed pleased at her question. "*That* way," he said, pointing. "Pike along now, *and fergit it!*!" He repeated the last words again with emphasis, shaking his head solemnly with a threat in his voice.

Anne looked about her dazedly. "Why, I should have guessed it was *that* way!" she murmured. "I'm all turned around!"

"Must have gone right round the mounting," said the man with a grin. "And it's pathless wilderness, too," he spoke slowly. "Ye're lucky to git off so well, I tell ye!" He was rowing away in the boat. "What's

yer name, missy?" he asked with a sudden thought, lying on his oars. "I might want to remember it, in case ye don't do as I say. In case ye *tell!*!"

Anne had a mind not to reply, and to run for home instead. But she was too doubtful about the path, and she spoke her name.

"Anne Poole!" exclaimed the man. "Not Chester Poole's gal?"

"Why, yes," said Anne, surprised at his black look.

The man in the boat gave an exclamation. He seemed half inclined to put back after her. "The scalawag!" he muttered. "If I'd 'a known that!" But Anne waited to hear no more, not even to thank him for the kindness he seemed already to repent. She began to run along the path, strangely confused because it seemed to go in the wrong direction. It was like running "through the looking glass!" It was only when she caught sight of the boys' camp, and Dick Reed coming to meet her with a shout of welcome, that she was sure she was really headed for home.

*"Scalawag!"* the word echoed in her ears. She had never heard it before. What did the man mean? Was he insulting her or her father with that name? She resolved to hold her tongue as he bade her.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ANOTHER SIDE

**I**N answer to Dick's reassuring call "Here she is!" the Round Robin came running, pale and anxious, to greet Anne. Not a word of reproach did she hear. Only affectionate joy that she was safe.

The girls had re-climbed the mountain as soon as they missed Anne, and had hunted for her up and down, until they saw it was growing late, when they were afraid of being overtaken by the dark. When they returned with the news that Anne was lost, the Camp was in consternation. Dick wanted to start out immediately on search. But Tante made the boy wait to hear what Captain Sackett should advise, after Nelly had told him.

While Anne had her late supper the others gathered round to hear her story. The Twins

could not get close enough to her. But mindful of the tall stranger's caution, Anne did not mention the hut in the woods, nor say much about the man who had brought her home; though she did mention the cave, at which word Dick pricked up his ears.

Even while Anne was concluding her description of how it felt to be lost alone on the mountain; and while the Twins were still shivering to think how dreadful it would have been to stay out there all night, Captain Sackett came striding up. His wrinkled face was anxious and drawn. He carried a lantern in his hand, evidently prepared to make search through the dark for the lost girl.

"Any news?" he called from a distance, unable to wait. And when they shouted "Found!" he gave a low fervent ejaculation of thanksgiving that went straight to Anne's heart. "I didn't know anybody cared so much about me!" she said to herself.

"Nelly's almost sick," said the Captain. "She blames herself for having let Anne get lost. For of course, this one's a tender-foot, though she has lived in these parts longer than

Nelly has. The girl oughtn't to have let Anne stray off. I told her so!" The Cap'n looked unwontedly stern for him.

"Oh, it wasn't Nelly's fault," Anne hastened to say. "It was my own doing. I didn't follow my leader, but stopped without telling. And that was breaking the Club rule. It was silly of me! I'm sorry." Anne drooped, very tired and ashamed.

The Captain looked at her kindly. "That's right," he said with approval. "Not ashamed to say you're sorry when it's your own fault. Well, I'm glad it turned out all right! That saves me a hunt to-night. I'll hurry back and tell Nelly, so she and Polly won't be worryin'. And I'll tell Maguire and Chatto they won't have to comb the mountain with me after all. You would have had the whole neighborhood busy huntin' for you, girl!" he said to Anne, grinning affectionately.

"Oh, I shouldn't think they'd do it for *me!*!" said Anne humbly, remembering how little notice she had ever taken of the people at the Harbor. She didn't even know the men who belonged to those names.

"Neighbors are neighbors," said the old man. "Everybody turns to and helps in time of trouble, don't they? That's American!"

"Tell Nelly she is a splendid leader," said Anne shyly, "and I'll never hang back again on a trail. And please tell her I am coming over to-morrow to see her—and the rabbit."

Everybody was glad enough to go to bed, tired and frightened as they all had been in various ways. But they did not all go immediately to sleep. After Anne and Beverly were safely tucked into their little cots, the southern girl whispered another story to her tent-mate's astonished and horrified ears; a tale with which she had decided not to burden the already over-worried Tante until to-morrow.

"Who do you fancy your old man was, Anne?" she drawled. "Because I daresay he was the same man who was hunting the deer, and who so nearly shot me. But how could he be in two places at the same time, on the sea-shore and in the woods? Unless he has the Seven League Boots that Nancy is always talking about."

“Nearly shot you, Beverly? What do you mean?” Anne who was almost ready for sleep, came wide awake again and sat up in bed with a gasp of horror.

“Why, didn’t anybody tell you-all? It was like this. We were poking down the mountain the second time, pretty tired and discouraged because we couldn’t find you, Anne. It seemed awful to leave you there alone on the mountain, and night coming on. It makes me creep to think of it now! Those dark woods! But what could we do?”

“I was a goose,” said Anne. “How tired you must all be!”

“Well, Nancy was a little ahead,” Beverly went on. “She didn’t seem so tired as the rest of us, and Nelly was close behind her. Nelly had just said ‘We must keep together, girls, for it is growing darker.’ When Norma cried ‘Hark! I hear something!’ You know how sharp her ears are, being a musician? ‘It must be Anne coming!’ I said, and I was pleased. So I ran out to meet you. Something brown was coming, sure enough, just

the color of our khaki suits. It came leaping and crackling the bushes, as if frightened. And then I saw it was a beautiful tawny deer followed by two baby fawns, like long-legged yellow dogs. They were coming straight towards me, the pretty things! But when they spied us they swerved abruptly and bounded away into the underbrush and were out of sight in a minute. We were so surprised that we didn't move or speak a word. Then all of a sudden Nelly Sackett who was close to me gave a jump right at me and knocked me down on the ground."

"Why, what did she do that for?" cried Anne.

"Lucky she did!" answered Beverly. "It was the quickest thing you ever saw, and it saved my life. 'Don't fire!' yelled Nelly as she jumped. But in that very same instant there was a rifle-crack. The bullet must have gone right over my head. It hit the tree behind me!"

"Oh, Beverly! Who fired it?"

"I don't know who he was. But a minute

later a man's head poked out of the bushes. He had the most wicked, dark face, but he looked frightened enough then. 'I thought it was a deer,' he said in a gruff voice with a curious accent. 'Didn't mean nothin'.' And without another word he disappeared."

"That must have been the shot I heard!" said Anne. "O Beverly, if I had known what it was! How brave Nelly was to save you!"

"That makes another hero in that family," said Beverly. "They just seem to do the right thing when the time comes, don't they?"

"Beverly, what did that man look like?" asked Anne thoughtfully.

"He was short and dingy, with a black beard and little bright eyes," she answered. "He wore a cap and a red shirt. I couldn't see any more in that quick minute. But I reckon he was some kind of strange foreigner." Beverly's voice was growing drowsy, and she drawled more than ever.

"It wasn't my man!" thought Anne. "I wonder which of them lives in the 'ha'nted house'? And what is he doing there all by

himself? I wonder what that man meant by 'Scalawag'? And oh, how glad I am Beverly was not killed!"

With a grateful heart at the end of an eventful day, Anne fell asleep.

## CHAPTER XIV

### COSTUMES

TANTE was going to have a birthday. It was the Twins who let out the secret which they had been charged to keep. But it is easy to understand how, while it is hard enough for *one* person to keep a secret, it must be twice as hard when you are *two!*

“What shall we do to celebrate Tante’s birthday?” asked Beverly, consulting the Club. In view of her relation to the person in question, Nancy declined to act as chairman. There were six in conclave, Nelly Sackett being absent, for this was a hurry-up call. The birthday was only two days distant, the family secret having been well kept till now.

“We must have something jolly, where everybody can do something,” suggested Cicely. Someone spoke of a play; but they

agreed that would take too long to prepare. Somebody else thought a surprise party would be nice. But then everyone would not be taking part. Tante must be in it too.

“Let’s have a dress-up party! I know what I want to be!” It was of course Norma’s idea. Norma was always acting out some part or “trying something on to prettify herself,” as Dick said.

The suggestion appealed to the Club at once. “Let’s ask Tante if she would like it,” said Beverly. And Tante said she should like it very much indeed. She too had always enjoyed dressing up. There would be a full moon, and they could parade and dance or do whatever they liked out of doors under the trees in the early evening.

At first Hugh and Victor demurred. The idea of dressing-up seemed silly to them. “We’ll look on,” they said, man-like.

“Oh no! Everybody must be in costume!” declared Tante. “Nobody can be a mere spectator at my party. I am sure you can find something to wear without much trouble; just to please me!”

"All right!" said Victor with a sudden grin. "I have an idea." Then Hugh said he had an idea too—a *dark secret!* As for Reddy, he could hardly wait, he was so eager to get into his costume.

"What about Nelly Sackett?" asked Beverly. "We must let her know in time to get ready."

"Of course," agreed Nancy. "She will have to hurry, if she has only to-morrow to fix her costume, by herself. She said she was not coming over to-day. Can't someone take time to let her know?"

"I'll go over and tell her," said Anne unexpectedly. "I was going any way to see my rabbit, Plon."

"You can ask Nelly to stay all night," suggested Mrs. Batchelder. "We can put her up somewhere. We have done it before."

"She can have my bed," said Beverly eagerly. "I will sleep on the floor."

"No, I will," said Anne, after a minute.

"Well, you can settle that later," suggested Tante. "You can even pull your two cots together and make them up crosswise for three. Once when I was a little girl I went

visiting with some of my cousins, and seven of us girls slept in one bed! To be sure that was in the days of the big old-fashioned bedsteads, which were like arks."

"I'll paddle you around in the canoe, Anne, if you like," offered Dick. "I've agreed to go to the Harbor for the mail. And I'll call for you on the way back."

"That would be very nice," said Anne gratefully.

"Dick is going to buy a costume at the Harbor; no fair!" cried Norma.

"Let's make it a rule that nobody shall buy anything new. Let's put together our costumes entirely out of whatever we already have," said Tante, who knew how very little pocket money most of the campers had.

"Or whatever we can find, or make out of nothing?" added Nancy.

"Or borrow?" suggested Anne. "We can borrow or lend, can't we?"

"Of course!" they chorused. Already they had an eye on one another's possessions. "But don't anyone tell what you are going to be," cautioned Nancy.

So it was agreed.

The girls scattered in various directions. Anne went straight to the store-room and rummaged in the trunks which she had not opened since she came to Round Robin. "I thought I might have a chance to wear this," she said exultingly to herself, as she drew out a shimmering mass from its tissue-paper folds. "Mother said it was nonsense to bring a Columbine dress down here. But now I am glad I did. Nobody will have anything half so fine. Now let's see if I can't find something for Nelly. It would be nice to help her out. I expect she hasn't anything that would do to wear."

Anne went on rummaging. "Why, here's that nun's costume!" she said presently. "I didn't know Mother put that in, it's so ugly. I wonder if Nelly would care about that? She could wear anything underneath and be comfortable. I think I will take it over to her."

Anne folded up the nun's costume and tucked it under her arm. Dick was waiting in the canoe. "Hello!" he called as she came down the path. "What you got there? A

costume for Nelly, I bet! Going to dress her up as a guardian angel or something?" Anne stopped short and hesitated.

"Wait a minute," she said, turning in the path. "I've got to go back for something, Reddy." When she came down the path again she had quite a different bundle under her arm; a package in white tissue paper.

"That looks still more like an angel's robe than the other did," grinned Dick. But Anne did not tell him what it was.

As soon as they were off in the canoe Dick began to ask Anne more questions about her adventure on the mountain, which had made a great impression on his imagination. He had already bothered her so much that she grew impatient whenever he returned to the subject. Which direction was the cave? What did the place look like when she came down the mountain? Had she noticed which way the sun was? Weren't there any landmarks? Did the man look like a pirate? If pirates were in the wind Dick wanted to be the one to find them. Anne was vague, but she stuck to one point.

"It was a long way from here; it took at least half an hour to come. And we came from the *south*—no, not from the north, Reddy!"

"You must have walked miles off the trail to get down to the south of the mountain," Dick persisted. "I can't understand it!" But Anne reminded him that he had met her returning from the south of the camp, which he couldn't deny.

"I don't see through it!" muttered Dick, completely mystified. He had scoured every foot of shore from Round Robin to the Harbor, and for miles beyond. But no cave could he find. When he asked discreet questions of the natives like Lonny Maguire, the ablest fisherman of them all, or of Hopkins the light-house keeper, who had always lived here, they shook their heads and said they didn't know of any cave on the main-land at the foot of the mountain.

"They would be likely to know if there was such a cave, now wouldn't they?" argued Dick. He began to believe that Anne had been dreaming.

But Anne only said positively, "I know what I saw, Reddy. Let's not talk any more about it."

"Right-o!" said Reddy. But he did not mean to quit looking just yet.

By this time they had reached the Captain's cove, and Dick set Anne ashore, promising to call for her again in about an hour.

Anne started up the path with her white package under her arm, and met Nelly coming down.

"Hello!" said Nelly in surprise, for Anne had been over only the day before to visit the rabbit. "All alone?"

"Yes," said Anne. "Dick brought me. I wanted to see you by yourself. It's a secret. You see, the Club is going to have a dress-up party for Tante's birthday, day after to-morrow. And of course you are to come."

"Of course," agreed Nelly, simply.

"And you will have to wear a fancy costume. Everybody will."

"But I never can get ready so soon. I haven't any dress," protested Nelly.

"That's what I thought," said Anne eagerly,

with the tactlessness she had yet to unlearn. It made Nelly flush. But Anne went on with the best will in the world. "So I came to bring you something that I think will do nicely, and will look lovely on you. I hope you will wear it. It will save a lot of trouble." She held out the package to Nelly.

Nelly looked eager but doubtful. "Come up to the house and let Mother look, too," she said, and the two girls scampered up the path.

"Mother! Anne has brought me a dress," said Nelly Sackett, explaining to Aunt Polly in a few words. "Come right up to my room," she invited Anne, leading the way up the narrow stairway to the second story.

Nelly's room was small. Anne thought she had never been in so small a bedroom; unless you dignify a tent with that name. But Nelly's room was clean as a whistle, with quaint old-fashioned furniture and braided rugs, and an ancient hand-woven bedquilt that Mrs. Poole would have coveted. Out of the east window Nelly had the prettiest view of the sea; while from the other corner she looked right into the branches of an old

apple tree, gnarled and twisted by its hard life in the bleak Cove, during northern winters.

“You can lay it on my bed,” said Nelly, smoothing the blue and white quilt. Aunt Polly had followed more slowly up the steep flight, and now stood watching, hands on hips, while Anne unfolded the sheets of tissue and shook out the ruffles of white tarleton. Anne handled the pretty Columbine dress as if she loved it.

“Oh, how lovely!” cried Nelly, gently touching the spangled sparkling bodice, the satin slippers and the tinsel wand. Anne held up the crown of flowers and looked at it with her head on one side.

“It is pretty, isn’t it?” she said. “I danced in it at a fancy-dress party last winter. But that was indoors. It will look even lovelier out of doors, in the moon-light, under the trees! This crown will be nice on your curly hair.”

“I never saw anything so sweet!” exclaimed Nelly. “But it might get hurt.”

“You and I are about the same size,” Anne went on, not noticing the objection. “I’m sure

you can wear the slippers and everything. Won't you try them on?"

"But what are you going to wear?" asked Nelly. "Yes," added Aunt Polly, "what about you, Anne?"

"Oh, I have something," said Anne carelessly. "There's another dress I wore in a play, at school—a nun's dress; that will do very nicely." She could not help thinking how ugly the nun's costume **really** was. Nelly had been thinking too.

"I don't believe it is half as pretty as this," she said. "I can't wear your things, when you ought to wear them yourself. Besides, I never had on a dress like this in my life, and I'd feel funny wearing it out of doors."

"She would so," agreed Aunt Polly wagging her head. "But it was kind of you to think of it, Anne."

"It isn't kind," protested Anne. "Please take the dress, Nelly. I'd like to give it to you. I have lots of dresses at home."

Nelly hesitated, fingering the tarletan folds. "No," she said slowly, "I'd rather not, thank you. It wouldn't be nice. I'll fix something

else. I guess I can think of something easy."

"But what? What can you be?" Anne was really disappointed, and showed it like a spoiled child who isn't having her own way.

"I'll be—I'll be—a mermaid!" said Nelly suddenly. "That's easy! Nancy said once that I'd make a fine mermaid, with my hair loose, and my green bathing-suit, and some shells."

"Then I shall be a mermaid, too!" declared Anne. "My bathing suit is red; but we can get kelp and things and drape both. My hair isn't pretty and long like yours, but I can make some with seaweed. Mermaids can't dance, but we will *swim*. Let's go as mermaids together. Shall we, Nelly?" Aunt Polly looked as pleased as Punch.

"All right, let's!" Nelly agreed with shy enthusiasm. "That will be fun! But who will wear this lovely dress?" she touched it again with a soft finger.

"Oh, I don't know—Gilda, perhaps," said Anne carelessly. She did not know that Gilda was already provided for. "Let's go down to the beach and get some shells and things now before Dick comes back for me."

The two girls ran off, chatting and laughing. And Aunt Polly standing in the doorway watched them with kind eyes. In a moment Anne darted back with a question. "Aunt Polly," she said, "if I come over some morning very soon, will you show me how to make biscuits like those you gave me yesterday? I have got to take my turn at getting supper before long. And I'd like to surprise the Round Robin. They don't think I can do anything—and I can't!" she confessed. "But I think I can learn, if Norma and Beverly can."

"Sure you can!" said Aunt Polly. "An American girl ought to be able to do 'most anything. Come right over Friday morning and I'll give you a lesson while I'm baking." Anne thanked her and ran off to join Nelly.

"Who's that down on the beach with Nelly?" asked Cap'n Sackett coming up to the house from the opposite direction. Aunt Polly told him of Anne's errand. "Sho!" said the Captain. "She's got a good heart, that little girl, hasn't she, Polly? Mermaids is it, they're going to be? Lemme see; I guess I've

got some truck they might like." And after rummaging in the drawers of an old bureau Cap'n Sackett joined the girls on the beach with his arms full of an odd collection.

"Mermaids ahoy!" he shouted. "Here's some loot for ye. Want some coral beads? I got 'em in the South Sea when I was a lad. And here's some strings of shells. Kinder pretty, ain't they? Want these things to dress up with, eh?"

"Oh yes! How pretty they are!"

"We can make nets for our hair," said Nelly. "And look, Uncle, here are some lovely long devil's aprons we have found to make us fringy tails."

"You will give us some pieces of net to drape over our shoulders, won't you, Cap'n?" begged Anne. "We shall be so trimmed-up and beautiful that the old bathing suits will hardly show."

"Oh Anne! What fun it will be!" said Nelly. "I'm glad we are going to dress alike."

"I'm glad too," said Anne. "It's lots more fun to make your own costume for a party

than to wear one that is all ready for you, isn't it?"

"Here comes Dick," said the Captain. "Don't leave your bundle, Anne." Anne picked up the tissue package which she had left lying on the beach and had almost forgotten.

"Don't forget to come over early, and plan to spend the night," she said to Nelly. "We will dress in the bath house. Good-bye, Nelly!"

"Good-bye, Anne!" the girls waved and smiled until the canoe was out of the Cove.

## CHAPTER XV

### TANTE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

TANTE'S birthday was a beautiful, bright blue day; what the towns-folk called a "*real* Harbor day." You will notice as you go around the world, that the *real* day of any place you visit is always the best kind of day one ever sees there. Perhaps the same thing is true of people.

There were two rules at the Camp about birthdays. One was that there should never be any "boughten" presents. The second rule was that the hero or heroine of the occasion should do exactly as he pleased all day, and that everyone should fall into his or her plans.

There was a curious collection of gifts at Tante's place when she came down to breakfast. By her plate was a bowl of luscious strawberries—the last of the season, which the Twins had found by very careful hunting over

acres of meadow the day before. They knew how much their mother loved the wild strawberries, and how lonesome she was going to be without them for a whole year. "Well, this will make the year a little shorter, won't it, Mummy?" said Freddie. "Only from July till June."

"Some day we are going to take Mummy all up and down the world, wherever the strawberries grow," said Eddie. "Hugh says we could begin in the winter in the far south and chase them right up to the Arctic circle, where they might still be juicy in September! Wouldn't that be fine?"

"But they would never be so good anywhere as these are, I'm sure," said Tante.

Norma had picked a beautiful bunch of flowers for Tante—little wild orchises and ferns and cotton grass, which she had arranged in an original jardinière made of a tin can covered with birch bark. Cicely had strung a beautiful necklace of hemlock cones with the red beads of the bunchberry set between. Beverly had finished at last the basket which Sal Seguin had helped her begin. Indeed,

Beverly had seen the old Indian woman twice since that first visit. Once she had met her by chance on the shore near the bathing beach, and had brought down the half-finished basket for advice. Once again old Sal had looked her up in Camp, with a present of dyed red grass. So Tante's basket had a beautiful border to finish it.

Nancy had written her mother a birthday poem, and Hugh had whittled her a weather-vane—a round robin painted red, to go on the flag pole in front of the Camp. Anne gave her the prettiest pebble she had found—lovely mottled green with a white circle round it, which made it a "lucky stone." Victor had painted her a little sketch.

As for Dick, that ingenious boy had made a wind-harp by stringing the frame of a wooden box with twisted silk thread. And when Tante put it under the half-opened window in a strong breeze, it made the most odd and beautiful sounds, like fairy music written in no human key.

"Nobody ever had such interesting pres-

ents!" declared Tante, when she had looked at them all.

"Mine you cannot see till ze evening," said Gilda with a sly nod. Tante knew quite well that Gilda had been making candy all the previous afternoon; and Gilda knew that she knew. But it was a secret all the same.

"Now, what do you want to do, Mother?" asked Hugh, following the second camp rule. "We are your slaves to-day. Choose what you would like best."

"I would like best to do exactly what I always do!" laughed Tante. "A little work, and a little play, a little reading, a little walk, and a little rest. Nothing could be better than that, for me. Every day is like a birthday, you see, at Round Robin. Only we shall also have a party this evening."

Nelly Sackett came over early from the Cove; and then Tante had two more presents. For Nelly brought a great bowl of lobster salad from Uncle Eph and Aunt Polly. And she herself had made a wonderful rope of twine, in twenty intricate knots and twists, for Tante to use as a watch-chain.

After early supper Nelly retired with Anne to the boat house on the beach, where they could help one another to dress without being disturbed, and, as Anne said, where they could fish up more trimmings when they were needed.

With much giggling they put on their bathing suits and adjusted their seaweed skirts which they had sewed firmly, each with a long trailing tail. Anne had fashioned two pretty loose caps of shells, which looked quaint on their heads, one covering curly red hair, the other perched on sea-weedy locks. On their bare arms the mermaids wore strings of coral beads and shells, and each carried in her hand a great conch shell which Uncle Eph had brought from some queer corner of the world. They made a very alluring pair of mermaids, just of a height, as they stole up the path together when the signal horn blew for the party to begin.

When they peeped through the bushes they saw a strange company already gathered on the grass in front of Round Robin. In the middle of a little group about the flag-pole

stood a stately figure in red, white and blue. On her head was a red liberty cap, and in her hand she carried a horn of plenty. Behind her stood an old and very black man, with grinning white teeth and bushy hair. He was dressed in shabby old clothes and wore a broad-brimmed straw hat, and leaned on a stick.

"Tante must be Columbia," whispered Nelly Sackett, "isn't she lovely!" "But what is Hugh?"

"I think he's Uncle Remus," guessed Anne. "This is his 'dark secret.' Hugh is always talking about '*Brer Rabbit, he lay low!*' Let's wait a moment and see the others come."

Two little Indians were frisking around the feet of Columbia, chasing a clown dog in a wonderful ruffled collar. It looked as if Doughboy's costume would not last through the party, for it was already badly tattered. The Twins with their bows and arrows wanted to shoot everybody. But a Wild West character, in a sombrero and leggings, with a red handkerchief knotted about his neck and a lasso in his hand, was trying to restrain them.

"Wow!" yelled Reddy as he dexterously whirled his lasso over Indian Freddie's shoulders, bringing that youngster to the ground, much to his astonishment. "Don't you be too rough with these strangers! It will never do to scalp a Fairy!"

For out of the woods was gliding a beautiful creature in green drapery fringed with oak leaves, and with an oak garland on her long golden hair. A green veil fell over her shoulders and bare arms, which she waved like wings. The clown dog fawned at her feet in an adoring fashion.

"I am the Spirit of the Woods," said a gentle voice. No one but the English girl had a voice like that. It did indeed sound like the wind in the pine trees on a spring night. "The Indians ought to love me, for I furnish them with bark for their canoes and wood for their bows and tepee poles. And I sing the little papooses to sleep."

"Isn't Cicely sweet?" said Nelly admiringly, and Anne agreed. She began to regret the Columbine costume she had given up, and glanced down at her make-shift rig with some

misgiving. "If I had worn the other I should easily be the finest," she thought. But Nelly Sackett had no such regret. "We will creep up, like the tide, last of all," she whispered, squeezing Anne's cold fingers.

Now from opposite directions two figures emerged out of the woods. One was dressed in a simple brown dress, with a white apron, kerchief and cap, and carried a book in her hand, trying to look demure. The other was a pretty Italian peasant, with the brightest colors in her head-dress and embroidered apron. Long scarlet ear-rings—made of partridge berries—dangled on her shoulders. Norma had no difficulty in looking her part.

"Well met!" said the little brown maid gravely. Nancy and Norma were the best actors of the party, and had prepared their speeches beforehand. "Thus you, the newest emigrant, meet the earliest, on Columbia's ground." Nancy dropped a curtsey to Norma. "I represent my ancestor Ruth who came over in the *Mayflower*."

"You are the New England Conscience; but I am the Artistic Temperament," smiled



a-fairy-creature - a-gnome - a-gypsy-queen





Norma. "You weren't very cordial to me at first. But you are improving."

"Even so, I might teach you something still, of patience and courage and thrift. But I am trying to get rid of my prejudices, anyway. I do most awfully want to get what is best for my Country. I have always tried to do that, have I not, Columbia?"

"Yes; but you are apt to set too much store by book-knowledge; and you're apt to think that anyone who did not come in the *Mayflower* like yourself is the 'scum of the earth!'" retorted Norma.

"The Pilgrims made things ready for the later emigrants," said Nancy. "But you do more complaining than we did."

"Come now!" said Columbia, "I must have no quarreling under my Flag. The Stars and Stripes give peace and shelter to all kinds of children. Miss Pilgrim, you must welcome all the later pilgrims who come, as you did, with a good heart and a high purpose. Some of them need your gifts. But some of them bring gifts that you needed."

"That is so," said Nancy magnanimously.

"I'll try to remember. But who are these noisy creatures? I think you are entertaining a good many disorderly persons, Mother Columbia. You must look out!"

"They will have to obey my rules or they cannot stay at my party!" said Columbia. "But gaiety is not always disorder. It is sulkiness that is unsafest."

"*Gone with the raggle-taggle gypsies O!*" Voices singing, the click of bones and the twang of strings announced the arrival of two dancing, beribboned ones. Everybody but Doughboy applauded the two gypsies who now capered into the circle. Doughboy strongly disapproved of the Romany. Victor Lanfranc and Beverly had conspired very successfully. The tall Victor had managed to turn his old khaki uniform into gay apparel wth the aid of ribbons and patches. Over his shoulder he wore Nancy's red cape. He had borrowed Norma's plaid sash and he had tied up his legs with crossed scarlet braid, instead of puttees. He looked very picturesque with his black mustache and a broad hat slouched over a red bathing cap.

Beverly had the corn-popper slung over her shoulder to represent a guitar, rubber bands stretched across it, twanging under her fingers. In a red table-cloth skirt, with a bath-towel apron and a scarlet sweater, and crowned with a waste-basket hat wreathed in daisies, she was a dashing Gipsy queen. There was a lull after their dance. "Let's go now," whispered Anne. "They are about all there now, I think."

Making a swimming motion with their arms the two mermaids glided into the moonlight, and were greeted with various cries from the group. "Hurrah!" "Look at the Mermaids!" "*Bravissima!*" "*Bow wow!*"

Anne and Nelly swam around the group with their long tails trailing in a very effective fashion, to Doughboy's great delight. Finally they dived down into the grass and lay shaking with laughter. For Doughboy had taken this as a special invitation to play. And their unrehearsed dive was the only way to stop his attachment to them.

"Welcome, Sea Ladies!" Columbia hailed them. "Old Ocean and his powers are the

best friends of Columbia. She could not do without you."

"They are dressed alike, only one is red and one is green," said Freddie. "Are they lobsters, Mother?"

"They look just alike; only one is curly and one is weedy," said Eddie. "That is so!" one and another of the group agreed in surprise. "I didn't notice it before. Or is it just the moonlight?"

"They might be sisters," said Nancy wonderingly. "Nelly and Anne!"

"Do we look alike?" whispered Nelly Sackett rather wistfully to Anne.

"I don't know," said Anne, trying not to look annoyed. "Costumes do change people a lot." They sat down in the grass side by side, with their tails gracefully curled under them out of Doughboy's reach.

"Everybody present?" asked Columbia. "No, ma'am," said Uncle Remus. "One chile missing. Hello! Here it comes!"

A funny little noise like a bumble bee was heard, one could not say from which direction. It grew louder and louder, and presently

into the circle hopped the strangest little round figure, with brown legs, brown body, brown arms. It seemed a weird old gnome with a long grey beard, a hooked red nose and a pointed cap. He was blowing on some instrument that might be a pipe.

"It's a Brownie!" shouted Freddie. Eddie cowered closer to his mother's skirts. "Is he real?" he asked. "Where did he come from?"

Indeed the Brownie was so real that no one would have recognized him. He went dancing around the circle, teasing the nearly frantic Doughboy, then disappeared into the woods. "Oh he's gone! I wanted to see him some more!" cried Freddie. On the word the Brownie reappeared, dancing right up to Freddie and tossing a cone into his lap. Another cone hit Eddie on the nose. "It's Gilda!" he cried. "I know Gilda now!" and off the two little Indians raced in a wild pursuit of the Brownie. Presently they brought him back a laughing prisoner.

"We'll burn him at the stake!" yelled the Indians.

"Cannot burn ze kobold!" cried Gilda with

a squeaky voice that was still funnier with her accent.

"How did you do it, Gilda? Where did you get the costume?" cried the girls surrounding her in admiration. "I never saw anything so perfect as that nose!"

"Ze Pilgrimette did it!" lisped the Brownie, hopping on one leg and pointing elfishly at Nancy. "She found ze long beard growing on ze trees. She made my nose, so crooked and pink, wiz ze purple veins, out of a strange —what you call?—a leaf."

"It is a pitcher-plant leaf," explained Nancy. "I found one day that it would make the most perfect nose. And I was just crazy to wear it myself. But of course I had to represent the Pilgrims. And Gilda makes such a nice little round Brownie, doesn't she?"

"Columbia couldn't get along without her fairy-folk too," said Tante, smiling at the queer group. "I am glad they came with the other emigrants. Now let's have a Virginia reel in the moonlight."

So, like the Owl and the Pussy Cat—

*"Hand in hand on the edge of the strand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,"*

Tante and Uncle Remus leading off. It was a very pretty sight, with the bright moon making strange long shadows under the trees. But if any of the Harbor folk had happened to stray in this direction, without being warned, they would certainly have thought the people of Camp Round Robin had lost their minds!

After the Virginia reel, Tante led the band in a grand march about the place, and so back to Round Robin for refreshments. Every party in Tante's camp always ended with refreshments. When they entered the bungalow they were surprised to find that it was not empty. By the fire sat a figure, tending it and brushing up the ashes. He was indistinct at first. But gradually they made out it was a man in a tall hat and swallow-tailed coat.

"Why, it's Uncle Sam!" cried several voices.  
"Good for Uncle Sam!"

"It's Uncle Eph!" announced Nelly Sackett in the same breath. The tall figure rose gravely and bowed to Columbia. Captain

Sackett's face was indeed like the pictures of Uncle Sam, with his little chin-whisker, lank grey hair and long, humorous face.

"Good evenin', friends," said he. "I come to bring the lady her birthday cake. Aunt Polly made it as a s'prise."

"Oh, thank you, Uncle Sam!" Tante took the beautiful frosted cake, with her initials "R. B." marked in the first red raspberries. "How nice of you to come over!"

"I jest had to see those costumes!" chuckled Uncle Sam. "You certainly did look fine out there in the moonlight!"

While they ate salad and cake and Gilda's delicious Belgian fudge, and while they drank Tante's health in steaming cocoa, Uncle Eph told them about his costume. "This old hat has been up in my attic for a hundred years, I reckon. Belonged to my grandfather. He was a deacon and a soldier too, and this coat sorter combined the idea of both, I guess." He was watching Nelly and Anne as they passed in front of him together. "My! don't they look alike!" he muttered. "I never

would have believed it! Coming home with me, Nelly?" he asked as he rose to go.

"No, I'm going to stay with Anne," said Nelly happily. And he left her there, looking almost as happy himself.

## CHAPTER XVI

### NEIGHBORS

ONCE every year Round Robin gave an entertainment for the children of Old Harbor. The Camp was rather far from the village, so they always had the "show" in the Casino, a little wooden building which the summer residents had put up close by the steamer landing. On Sunday the Casino was used for services by different groups all day long; early in the morning Norma, Gilda, and Victor went to hear Mass; a little later the Batchelders and Cicely had their Communion; then there was Morning Prayer which many other summer people besides Beverly and Dick attended. And Sunday evening the Casino was filled by a large congregation in which Anne joined with Nelly and Captain Sackett. Dick called it a "Round Robin Church." Maybe some day all

the Churches will have one getting-together service.

During the week the Casino was used for all sorts of good times. So here it was that Round Robin was going to give a show for the school children. The program was practically decided; Norma would sing, Hugh would black-up and do a negro song and dance; Nancy would tell a fairy story. But they needed one more "act." Then Nelly had her great inspiration. "Anne! You dress up in that sweet Columbine costume and do your dance. You said you danced Columbine at a party?"

"Oh, I can't!" protested Anne in horror. "I don't know the children here. They don't like me. I heard the Maguire children say so one morning when they brought the eggs."

"They will like you when they know you; when they see you in that lovely dress!" cried Nelly eagerly. And Nancy added her persuasion, saying it would be just the thing to illustrate the fairy-story she was getting ready to tell—about a beautiful fairy who danced at the King's ball. At first Anne was sure she

could not do it. But finally she consented. "I suppose it is time I did do something for my neighbors," she said, with poor grace.

And Columbine was the hit of the show!

The hall was full of mothers with their little children; about fifty of them, all "natives" of Old Harbor, or at any rate permanent residents there. The "summer people" had been invited, too. But they seemed too busy to come. Anne remembered that she had been asked to the Round Robin party last year, but had not had time even to answer the invitation.

Most of the little faces that gazed eagerly at the doings on the platform were of old Yankee types. But there were several with the broad, good natured features of the Irish, like the four little Maguires. And there were several handsome dark French Canadians; several Poles and Finns, whose fathers worked in the stone quarries.

They loved Norma's singing, and applauded her rapturously. They burst into squeals of mirth over Hugh and his funny dancing, blacked up as he was and wearing his Unc' Remus costume. They sat very quiet during

Nancy's fairy-tale, breathless with interest to see what was going to happen to the plain little beggar-girl who was invited to the King's ball, because she had been kind to a Pussy Cat, who was really the King's Fairy Godmother.

Anne sat on a little stool at the back of the stage while Nancy told the story. Over her Columbine dress she wore Tante's long black cape that covered her from top to toe, with the hood drawn over her hair.

"This is Goldie the little beggar girl herself," Nancy finished her story, stepping aside and pointing a wand at Anne. "Now, I am the Fairy-Godmother—Pussy Cat, who met the beggar girl in the wood. Rise, Goldie, and show me how you will dance at the King's ball to-night. You will dance so beautifully that he will invite you to be the Queen!"

Nancy waved the wand, and Anne rose slowly, throwing off the cape as she did so. There she stood in the beautiful sparkling dress, a crown of roses on her hair; in dainty stockings and slippers. *One, two, three!* Beverly at the piano, who had played

the accompaniment for Norma's songs, now began a spirited waltz, and Anne danced her fairy dance on the tips of her toes, circling and pirouetting like a real fairy.

"Oh!" cried the children rapturously. "Oh!" They had never seen anything like it. No professional "shows" ever came to their remote little village. "Do it again!" They begged, so fervently that Anne had to yield. With cheeks flushed at their pleasure, she repeated her steps, better even than at first. So that Norma cried out as she danced off the stage into the dressing-room, "Brava, Anne! I didn't know you had it in you!"

"Aren't they dear children?" said Anne. "I didn't know there were so many of them, and such pretty little things!"

"You'll have to come out and let them see you just as you are," said Nancy, delighted with the success of her illustrated fairy-tale. "They are just crazy, Anne!" So after Norma had sung another song, and Hugh had declared the "show" ended, the performers came out in front and made friends with the chil-

dren. At first the little ones were shy of Anne, but gathered about her in an admiring group.

"Are you really a Fairy?" lisped one little tot, touching a fold of the tarleton dress. "Can you make my dress look like that?"

"I wish I could!" said Anne, stooping over the baby, and patting her yellow curls. "Where do you live, Dear?"

"We live at the lighthouse," volunteered the baby's elder sister. "She's Patty and I'm Alice Hopkins. We used to see you riding on a pony," she added shyly. "But you looked cross, then. You didn't look like a nice Fairy. Do you wear this all the time now?"

These were the nearest neighbors to Idlewild, except the Sacketts. But Anne had never noticed them till now. Their father had care of the great light that made the Harbor safe for boats.

The other children pressed close to Anne, eager to feel her costume and see if she were real. One little black-haired Finn stepped up. "Can't I have one o' *them*?" he asked, pointing to the flowers on Anne's head.

"Of course you can!" she said, and taking

off the wreath she untied it and gave a flower to each child as far as they would go around. "They will bring you good luck," she declared.

Little Tom Maguire, pushing forward, boasted to the other children. "I know her! I seen her washin' dishes when I went to the Camp 'tother day. She didn't see me, though!"

"*She* never washed dishes!" protested Alice Hopkins. "Never!"

"When the beggar girl went to be Queen," Nancy added a postscript to her story for their benefit, "of course she took right hold of the housekeeping in the palace. And after that it was always done right. Because if you keep house in a fairy way, it is fun. That's what the Fairy Godmother brought Goldie to the palace for—to make things jollier all around."

("Good for you, Nancy!" Beverly squeezed her hand on the sly.)

The mothers were talking and whispering together in the back of the hall, pleased to see their children so happy. Some of them had recognized Anne.

"It's that Poole girl!" one exclaimed in

amazement. "That proud piece! I didn't know she could unbend so far."

"It's the childher done it," observed Mrs. Maguire with her hands on her hips, nodding wisely. "If she loves the childher, she'll be all right, believe me; rich though she may be, and spoiled, no doubt. Look at her now wid me Bridget in her arms! She'll spoil that swate dress of hers, entirely! But I daresay she can get another one aisy-like."

The children were loth to go away. But finally the hall was cleared, after Anne had made promises to come to see them all in turn, and Nancy had agreed to tell them some day what happened to the Beggar Girl who became Queen, and who taught the people how to put magic into chores.

The teacher of the little village school lingered for a word with the Round Robin. "Well!" she congratulated them. "You certainly did give those children a good time. I don't believe you realize all it means to them. They haven't much to exercise their imagination on, of course. It was a great idea to give them an illustrated fairy-story."

Nancy said she thought they were unusually attractive children.

"I wish I could do more for them," said Miss Merritt wistfully. "In the winter after you all go away there's nobody but me who can spare time to do much for them. I wish I knew more! I wish I knew about medicines, for instance. We are healthy folks here, on the whole; but things do happen, of course. You know, we haven't any doctor here in the winter. Doctor Black goes away when the summer people do."

Anne looked at her in horror. In Mr. Poole's house the doctor was always running in and out at the least "symptom" exhibited by one of the family. Her step-mother was continually ailing.

"What do you do when anybody is sick?" she asked Miss Merritt.

"We do the best we know how," answered the teacher. "Most of the women know about herbs and simple remedies. Some of them are quite skilled nurses, indeed. But it's pretty hard sometimes!"

"I should think so!" cried Anne. "Some-

thing ought to be done. I wonder if Father knows?"

"Children in 'most any place need more than they get," said Miss Merritt pathetically. "If only all the summer people would be interested in these little neighbors of theirs. For they are neighbors, even if it is only for a few weeks."

The Round Robin agreed that this was another case where a "getting together" was needed. And Anne Poole said to herself—"I will ask Father if I can't help those children some way." But she wished she need not have to ask; Father was so queer nowadays!

## CHAPTER XVII

### MYSTERY

EVER since the adventure of the Round Robin on the mountain Captain Sackett had been uneasy. It is not pleasant to know that there are lawbreakers in your neighborhood. Hunting deer out of season was bad enough. But to think of a careless rifle pointed at any creature in brown—who might have two legs instead of four! The Captain shuddered, whenever he thought of Beverly's narrow escape, and of Nelly's risk. Nobody in Old Harbor would shoot deer out of season; the Captain was sure of that. He was inclined to think it must be some passing stranger who had landed from a boat. Or perhaps it was some shepherd from a neighboring island where sheep were turned out for the summer, with one lonely man to keep them company. The exiles on those far

islands who saw no human being for weeks together were apt to get hungry for mischief once in a while.

"We'll keep an eye open," said the Captain to Hugh and Victor after one of their troubled parleys. "Don't let's scare the little girls about it. Only they mustn't go alone on the mountain again."

The young men went warily through the woods and scoured the mountain and shore for traces of the deer-chaser, but to no purpose. Even the deer seemed to have disappeared. As to the cave, Dick sometimes believed the ocean had swallowed it up.

Anne kept her secret about the "haunted hut." The more she thought about the ominous stranger's threatening words, the less she felt inclined to risk his revenge. How ugly he had looked! And how wickedly he had hissed that word "*Scalawag!*" Sometimes Anne wished she had told everything to Tante or the Captain in the first place. But now she was ashamed to confess how much she had been afraid.

One day, about a week after Tante's party,

Reddy came to Anne with an important air. "Come out on the rocks!" he whispered. "I've got a secret to tell you. Hurry up with these dishes." And seizing a clean dish-towel he began to rub the plates at a great rate.

"Goodness, Dick!" cried Anne with a laugh. "You'll rub holes in the granite ware if you go at it like that."

"Well, hurry," said Dick. "I can't wait. But you must promise not to tell." Anne promised, and presently they stole away to the rocks. With much mystery Dick went about telling her his secret.

"Well, I've discovered something," he began. "And because you were partly in it already, I thought we ought to have it a secret together."

Anne was pleased. "What is it all about?" she asked eagerly.

"Well; you still insist that your cave was south of here, do you?"

"Of course it is," she answered, looking bored. "Is that all it's about?"

"No, listen. Suppose that old Geezicks took you home in a circle? Then your cave

might be north of here, mightn't it? He might have gone all around Robin Hood's barn, as well as Round Robin, mightn't he?"

"I suppose so!" said Anne. "And it mightn't be so far, either. I didn't see how we went. He wouldn't let me look. He wanted to confuse me. Oh, Dick! You are clever!"

Dick chuckled. "Clever dog, me! Little old Sherlock Holmes! Well, I think I have found your cave, not two miles from here the *other* way."

"So near? But why haven't you found it before?" Anne stared in wonder.

"I never went that way. There's no path, and it is boggy by land. Then by sea it is full of rips and bars, the worst place along the coast, I guess. I took the canoe."

"Did you see my man?" Anne asked eagerly, but Dick shook his head. "I didn't explore much. I thought we'd go together, since the cave was really your find." Anne guessed how much Dick would have liked this adventure for his very own, and she was touched. "That was nice of you, Reddy!" she said. "When shall we go?"

"Right now, if you say so," he suggested eagerly. Anne hesitated. "Do you suppose it is safe for us to go alone?" she asked. "I haven't told anybody the whole story." Then of course Dick made her tell him everything; about the hut in the woods and the story that it was "haunted," and the threat of the tall stranger. Only she did not tell him the name he had called her father.

Dick whistled when the tale was finished, and his eyes shone. "Great!" he exclaimed. "It sounds like something exciting. Of course we will go by ourselves and ferret out the mystery. Of course I can take care of you! But we will be careful, yes. What will Hugh and Victor say, eh?"

Dick was anxious to recover the prestige he had lost by that laughable fiasco of the clambake. He wanted to get even with Hugh and Victor, who had never ceased to tease him about it.

Anne had some misgivings. But she was not willing that Dick should go without her. And she too thought it would be nice to be

the heroine of a real adventure,—if adventure it was to be.

They pushed off from the landing in the shadow of the fir-trees. The water of the bay was as still as quicksilver, just right for paddling, and Dick was an expert canoeist. He knew when it was safe to keep off-shore; when one might dare the neighborhood of those sharp and cruel rocks that guarded the cliffs.

“Now you must keep calm,” said Dick in his mock-hero manner. “And whatever you do, don’t scream.”

“The idea!” said Anne. “Of course I sha’n’t scream any more than you will. I didn’t scream before.”

In ten minutes or so they had rounded several points, and had passed a cove or two which they had seen before. Then the cliffs grew higher; the mountain seemed to come down close to the water. A series of closely-packed islands near the shore looked as if they had toppled from the cliff in early days. It was a wickedly dangerous place for boats. One felt that it was wise to keep outside these islands. But Dick had already investigated

in his light canoe, and knew that it was safe enough for him.

“I’m going in here,” he said suddenly, rounding the end of what turned out to be an island; though at a distance it had seemed part of the solid shore. Behind this island was another, the edges “overlapping” as it were, so as completely to conceal what lay beyond. Around this too Dick curved. And lo, there they were in the entrance to a narrow slit of a cove, running slantwise into the land, in such a way that no one would ever suspect its existence, unless he should come upon it as Dick had done, in a stealthy, threading canoe. The Indians might have known it long ago. But there seemed no reason why white men should ever find it, except by an accident. At the head of the cove was a beach of sand strewn with pebbles; quite deserted.

“Well?” said Dick, waiting for Anne to exclaim. “Well,” she answered, slowly, “is this my beach? You know I didn’t really see anything except from the shore. Oh yes, there’s the cave!”

As the canoe touched the sand, there to the

left yawned the cave. Anne pointed to the great entrance of rocks, black and romantic-looking. The pair stole up to it very cautiously, half expecting something to dart out at them. But no, it seemed quite empty. Only a few boxes lay about, with broken sides; some ropes and pots of paint; empty gasolene cans; jugs, broken bottles, a sack of straw. "This might be to make somebody a bed," said Dick. "But it hasn't been slept on yet."

The cave was some ten feet deep with a roof high enough for a tall man to stand upright. There was a hole through the roof in one place, a natural chimney, and it looked as if fires had been built there.

"It's a regular pirate cave!" said Dick. "But there aren't any interesting relics at all; not even a powder-keg or a cutlass."

"You really thought there were pirates?" said Anne. "Well, I didn't."

"That man was up to some mischief, though," argued Dick. "He couldn't be a fisherman. There are no lobster-pots around, or fishing nets, or floats. Though it seems a likely cove for lobsters, too."

"Here's the path I came down," said Anne, who had been investigating. "It goes up through these bushes. You wouldn't notice it if you didn't know just where to look."

"Let's follow it and see if we can find that hut in the wood," said Dick. "I'll never believe you weren't dreaming, unless we do."

"All right," said Anne with an inward tremor, "but we must be very careful."

"Let me go ahead," urged Dick.

They climbed the steep path which soon plunged into thick woods, as Anne remembered, broad and easy to follow. "Looks as if it was used pretty often," observed Dick. Then Anne pulled him by the sleeve. "There's the hut!" she whispered, pointing. "You don't see it till you are almost on it. I told you so."

There was no smoke coming out of the window now, but Dick motioned her to be cautious. They crouched low in the bushes and kept still for several minutes. There was not a sound about the place. The door was closed and the litter outside was cleared away. It looked indeed like the deserted cabin the

tall stranger had called it. But was it "haunted"?

"I'm going to peek in at the window," whispered Dick. Anne followed him, crawling on hands and knees. Cautiously they raised themselves and looked in. The hut was empty of persons, but full of a disarray of things. The one dirty window gave little light, but they gradually made out the strange, untidy details. In the wall were two bunks for sleeping. At one side stood a small stove, the pipe going up through the roof. A rifle hung on a bracket of deer antlers. The skin of a deer hung on a chair back. Dirty plates and knives and tumblers were scattered over the table. The rest of the room was filled with a mess of jugs and bottles, kegs and kettles—the strange outfit of some trade which the girl did not recognize.

"Moonshiners!" whispered Dick excitedly. Beverly would have known what he meant, for there has always been this lawless business in the southern mountains.

"What are Moonshiners, Dick?" asked Anne, shivering at his tone.

"Why, they make liquor in secret and sell it in secret. It's against the law," said Dick.

"How awful! And he dared call my father a Scalawag!" thought Anne indignantly. But it did not matter now. You couldn't take the word of a lawbreaker about anything.

"What's the name printed on that old packing-case?" asked Dick, whose eyes were growing used to the dim light of the hut. "Can you see, Anne?" They both pressed their noses close to the window panes.

"C. F." spelled Anne.

"P-O-O-L-E!" went on Dick. "Why Anne!" he gasped in surprise.

"C. F. Poole!" repeated Anne. "That's Father's name. What can it mean?"

"Maybe they just got the box off your father somehow," said Dick uncomfortably. He began to wish they had not come. "Let's go away, Anne."

But Anne had spied something else. On the floor under the window was a soiled and empty envelope. It was addressed to *P. Leveen* in a neighboring town. But the writing was Mr. Poole's; the date just a week ago;

and the mark was that of a Canadian city. He could not write to her, but he could write to this foreign-sounding moonshiner! Anne did not mention this discovery to Dick. But it troubled her greatly. It fitted in disagreeably with her forebodings.

"We'd better get away," said Dick. "Moonshiners are as bad as pirates when you spy their secrets. We must tell Cap'n Sackett and have them smoked out, while they're at the game."

"Yes," agreed Anne. "I ought to have told him before. That may be the very rifle that nearly killed Beverly!" she thought with a shudder. "And what will they find out about Father?" Her only comfort was that Captain Sackett himself was to be the investigator.

They hurried down the path as fast as they could, and Anne got into the canoe.

"Well, we've discovered something all right," triumphed Dick as he pushed off the canoe and crept into his own seat. "It might be more exciting if we had met those fellows up there in the hut. But I guess it was just as well for our health that we didn't——"

He held his paddle poised and stared fixedly out to sea. Anne followed his gaze. A motor boat was making her way in towards the beach, rapidly. There were two men aboard. The canoe lay still in the shadow of the trees while the boat disappeared around an island. Then, before it should reappear in the cove, Dick gave some swift strokes of the paddle that took them out behind another reef. Evidently they had not been seen. The steersman was busy threading the narrow, difficult channel. The other had seemed to be absorbed in a newspaper. Anne had had a chance to see both faces clearly.

"The tall man is the one who brought me home!" she whispered. "And the other one with the dark face must be the hunter who nearly shot Beverly!" The pair gazed at one another. They saw the mysterious boat re-enter the cove and disappear again. "They're both moonshiners," said Dick.

"One of the two is P. Leveen," thought Anne, "and Father writes to him!"

The Round Robin was of course greatly excited when they told the story of their adven-

ture. They could hardly wait to hear what Captain Sackett would say. But Tante declared they must not bother him that night. He was busy about something. Dick was disappointed also because Hugh and Victor had disappeared upon some mysterious errand, and he could not excite their envy with his tale. Indeed, even Tante seemed preoccupied, as if she had more important things upon her mind. But what could be more important than the arrest of these moonshiners?

"Any mail for me?" asked Dick, and was told No. Anne did not even bother to ask about mail for herself. She had quite given up hoping for a letter from home. And now she did not want one!

Soon after supper Tante excused herself and retired to her room with the daily papers and a packet of mail. Even the Twins could not help seeing that something was troubling Tante; but no one could tell Anne what it was.

"Ever since the Veterans brought the papers she has looked worried," said Beverly. "We haven't seen the news, so we don't know what it may be. I hope it isn't another war! Hugh

and Victor went right back to the village, without waiting for supper. I wonder what it is?"

Anne sighed. "I always seem to be waiting," she said. "I wanted to ask Tante something. But perhaps to-morrow will do as well."

At that same moment Tante was reading the newspaper, open at a page where a black head line read—"Failure of Great Banking Firm! Treasurer flees to Canada! Involves thousands in ruin!" Below was the picture of a blonde, well-dressed man whom Tante had seen hundreds of times sailing in his yacht or riding in his automobile in this very neighborhood, but to whom she had never spoken a word.

Presently she came downstairs looking rather pale. "Let's have a song before bed, shall we?" she said. So they sat quietly on the piazza while Norma sang a slumber song, to quiet their minds before sleep.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### FIRE!

**I**T was a warm July night. The Camp lay quiet and serene, everybody sound asleep.

The heat of the day, which had been unusual for the region, had brought out the spicy scent of the woods, and mingled it with the salty fragrance which makes the essence of Maine. But into the natural blend of outdoors came creeping another odor, not exactly unpleasant, but very different; a stinging disquiet for which the forest creatures have no name, only an instinctive fear. For it is no friendly fragrance, but one that spells danger and death. It was the smell of wood smoke.

The young men in their tents further south than Round Robin were the first to get the tang. They turned over uneasily in their sleep. Then Hugh sat up on his cot and

sniffed. He was wide awake in a moment, like a true soldier, and jumped out of bed. "Fire!" he thought. And his first fear was that the hearth-blaze at Round Robin had caught the bungalow. With dread at heart he hurried out of the tent and ran up the path to his mother's camp. But he soon saw that the smoke was not coming from that direction. The slight wind was from the south, and it brought with it a dense cloud of smoke, drifting through the trees. The fire was not far away.

Meantime Victor had wakened and was pulling on his clothes, wondering what had become of his tent-mate, and fearing the worst; when Hugh returned to tell Victor what he had found out. "The camp's all right," he said. "But there is a big fire somewhere in the neighborhood; at the Harbor, I think."

Dick's tent was empty. But even while they were calling him he came running in, all excitement. "It's Idlewild!" he cried. "The whole plant is burning. It's a great show

from the hill. Hurry up, fellows!" And he was off again.

"We might do something to help," said Victor catching up an axe. "Is there a fire company, or anything?"

"There is a little hand-engine," said Hugh. "But I doubt if it can do much if the fire has got a good headway, since they have a long way to come. Let's hurry."

"Oh, Hugh! What is it?" a girl's voice interrupted him. It was Nancy, disheveled, and dressed in a mackintosh. Behind her came Cicely with a lantern. "We thought at first Round Robin was on fire," she said breathlessly. "Then we suspected you chaps had set the woods afire down here. So we came to see. But it is further off, isn't it? The sky is all red. You can see it from the top windows of the bungalow. Tante and the Twins are looking at it."

"It is Idlewild burning," said Hugh gravely. "We are going up to help. You two run home and keep Anne from worrying, if you can."

"Run home indeed!" retorted Nancy in-

dignantly. "Don't you suppose we are going with you? We don't see a fire every day. And if it's Idlewild——"

"Is it Idlewild?" at the word Anne appeared, breathless, with Beverly behind her. They were both dressed, and both carried flash-lights. And they were both very much excited.

"Goodness!" muttered Hugh. "This is no time for Round Robins to be hopping around, in the middle of the night. I'm sorry, Anne. But you ought to be glad that Idlewild is empty, anyway."

"Yes," said she, "even the pets are gone. I want to go and see the last of it, if it is burning up."

"Come along the road, then. It's getting a little lighter, and there's still some moon." Hugh and Victor took the girls in charge and hurried them as fast as they could toward the direction of the fire.

Poor, splendid Idlewild! It was a pitiful sight, as all fires are, when so much care and thought and labor and money go up in smoke. The whole sky was lit up with a red glare,

and columns of smoke were pouring out of the roof of the house. Every little while there was a crash as a wall fell, and a leap of flame would follow. The little hand-engine from the Harbor was already there, and a band of stout men were ready to help hand the water-buckets. But the water-works at Idlewild were out of commission; the fire had caught in several places and had made too much headway already. There was scarcely anything that could be done, but try to prevent it from spreading to the woods.

A crowd had gathered to see the fire. People were constantly streaming up from the village in groups or singly, and they gossiped excitedly among themselves, commenting on the fire and on recent news. Victor and Hugh left the girls together near a group of women, and ran to help with the buckets.

“There’s Reddy!” cried Nancy, pointing. Dick was flying around in the smoke helping Captain Sackett and the other men remove the contents of some of the smaller buildings. For it looked as if the whole plant was doomed.

"The flames are coming out of my windows now!" said Anne to Beverly. "All my pretty rooms burned up! I shall never see them again." But she did not feel as badly about it as she would have done two months ago, had she known what was to happen. "It seems like the end of everything," she said. But Beverly answered:

"Oh no! Maybe it is only a beginning." Beverly did not know just what she meant; but it sounded comforting. And Anne seemed to like the idea. A woman was speaking in a high voice just in front of her:

"They say it must have been set. It started in a dozen places at once. Somebody hated him pretty bad."

"I guess there was more'n one!" another woman spoke bitterly. "He never done no good to this place. Just feathered his own nest, he did."

Were they talking about Anne's father? Someone jostled her and she lost Beverly in the crowd.

"How do you think the fire caught?" a summer cottager was asking the question of

a fisherman in tarpaulin and slickers who had fought the fire till he was exhausted and now rested on the handle of his axe.

"Fire was sot," said the man. "Cap'n Sackett's got an old Indian woman in charge. They caught her hangin' around the place just after the fire was discovered. Couldn't say what she was up to. Cap'n thinks she may have done it."

"Sal Seguin!" thought Anne. "I don't believe she did it."

"Poole had enemies enough in this town. But I don't know a feller mean enough to do this trick," said another man. "Look how they're all tryin' to help now—some of the very ones he let in for a fraud! There's Doc. Right, and Lonny Maguire."

"What does he mean?" thought Anne. "Fraud? Has someone been doing something dishonest?"

"He was a mean cur," said another fisherman, lounging up to this group, and never noticing Anne crouching behind them. "I allers thought so. Anybody who would drive his neighbors off land that had allers been *free*—

that ain't American, I say. Well, we can walk on it all we want after to-night, I guess. Poole will be walkin' elsewhere!"

"Yes, they say he'll have to go to prison for what he done," said the first man. "He took all my wife's sister's savings of twenty years. And she's a widder with five children!"

"He done me out of a thousand dollars," growled another slouching figure. "I'm glad his house is gone! I hated to see it here."

"I guess Poole's own children won't starve," said a woman's shrill voice. "He'll take care of that!"

"How many's he got?"

"Only two; a baby an' that proud, stuck-up piece who used to ride around last summer, don't you know? They say she——"

"Oh, she ain't so bad!" One of the women who had seen Anne dance had interrupted. But Anne moved hastily away before she heard more. She fancied one of the men was looking at her as if he recognized Poole's daughter. She stumbled along in the dark which was now lighting into a grey dawn, thinking vaguely that she would find

Cap'n Sackett and ask him why he suspected Sal Seguin, and what all these strange sayings meant. She passed behind the garage and greenhouse, the vegetable garden all dry and weedy. Between her and Idlewild was the little hollow containing the old spring-house and a tomb-like structure of stone, built into the side of the hollow, that was the ice-house and cellar. Anne remembered it as windowless and mysterious, lined with sawdust—at least the part she knew. There was another part that was kept locked and only Mr. Poole and the butler held keys.

Anne was amazed to see the door of the ice-house open, and the ground outside littered with something. She flashed her light. They were jugs and bottles like those in the hut on the mountain. Somebody had been putting them in—or taking them out?

More eager than ever to find Cap'n Sackett, Anne hurried on around the burning building to the other side. It was a night full of mystery and fear. Not until she clasped the great hand of Cap'n Sackett, who was standing still for a moment watching the last

crumbling ruin of the front wall fall into ashes, did Anne feel safe.

"Why Anne, child!" cried the Cap'n looking down at her. "Where did you come from? Hugh said you was safe with the other girls. You look tired and hot. You're tremblin', honey!" He put an arm about her. "Come right home with me. I'll tell the boys you've gone."

It was no use arguing. And indeed Anne had no mind to argue with the Captain. It seemed so restful and safe to be under his wing, asking no questions yet, hearing no explanations of all that puzzled her. She gave a sigh, and allowed him to lead her by the hand as he used to do when she was a little child, down the hill and across the field to the white house in the Cove.

"Sakes alive!" cried Aunt Polly who like everybody else in the neighborhood, including Nelly, was up and dressed. "If this ain't Anne!" She stared as if she saw a ghost.

"Yes, it's Anne," said the Captain quietly. "She's all tired out and excited. We got to put her to bed and let her sleep. It's a long

time till mornin,' Anne. It'll be all right in the mornin'."

For Anne had tried to ask him one question. He knew she had heard the gossip. He saw she was confused with something she wanted to tell him. But he only smoothed her hair and said she must go to bed. And strangely enough, already Anne felt quieted and comforted, and ready for sleep, in this house which no longer seemed strange to her, but in the best sense, "homely."

Aunt Polly took her upstairs to a little chamber adjoining Nelly's. Nelly was still out with the crowd on the hill, watching the last of Idlewild. It was a dear little room, all furnished with pretty things in perfect order, as if it had not been used for a long time. "It was Anna's room," said Aunt Polly, softly moving about to get some of Nelly's things for Anne's use, "the Captain's daughter who died, you know. It's the guest room now. You ought to feel at home in it, Anne. You have 'most the same name! Now you sleep sound till we wake you up."

## CHAPTER XIX

### NEWS

FOR years Chester F. Poole had been taking the money of other persons to line his own pockets. The savings of the simple people, his neighbors,—lumbermen, fishermen, farmers and the widows of poor sailors—had gone into his bank, because they trusted him. And out of this bank he had built his fine houses and paid for his expensive living. Now he was found out; and being a coward he had run away. If the law could catch him he would have to go to prison. But the money was gone and spent; nobody could pay back those too-trusting men and women and little children whom he had ruined. And what was to become of them?

This, in a few words, was what had filled the newspapers with gossip the day before, but which only Tante, Hugh and Victor had

happened to see. But after the wild night at the fire it was no longer a secret to anyone. Round Robin was an excited camp the next morning, with so much to talk over. And because Anne was not there they could talk freely, about both the fire and the bank failure. But it was about Anne herself that they were most concerned. Poor Anne! Could anything be more dreadful than to be the daughter of such a man? Poor little Golden Girl, whose gold had all worn off, because it was only cheap gilt after all!

"What will become of Anne, Tante?" asked Norma. "If Mr. Poole has lost every cent and must go to prison besides, what will his wife and children do?"

Tante shook her head. "His wife has relatives of her own, I believe," she said. "But, of course, they are not Anne's relatives. Mrs. Poole is her stepmother. It is too soon yet to know what Anne will do. Maybe it will not be as bad as it seems now." Nobody could guess what Tante meant, but her words seemed to make things a little better.

It had taken some time to make Gilda

understand what all the fuss was about. But when she did realize, she was filled with horror at this terribly unjust thing which had happened in her beloved America.

"Why, he is a Hun!" she exclaimed with her eyes blazing.

"There are selfish people everywhere, Gilda," said Tante sadly, "even in America. Their motto is not 'get together' but 'get everything for yourself!'"

"But zis is worse zan to be an orphan!" said Gilda tragically. "My fazzer died, one brave soldier. My mozzer died of ze frightful journey, when we were driven out by ze Huns. I am poor, and I *was* friendless. But I *was* never ashamed." Her eyes were full of tears for Anne.

"It is not Anne's fault," said Tante. "And when she comes back we must not seem to pity her. That would be hardest of all for her to bear. I think she will be brave, and that is better than being *golden!*"

"Anne is a brick!" volunteered Beverly unexpectedly. "And I know she will be brave.

I don't care what her father was. I like Anne!"

"So do we!" chorused the Club. And then, without any suggestion at all from their Captain, they broke into the Club yell, "Heia! Hoia! Together! Get together!"

Nelly Sackett heard the shout as she approached the camp, and she did not know what to make of it. She found them all on the piazza, just ready for the morning swim. They all rushed at her. "How is Anne?" they cried, and Nelly was pleased to see how eager and affectionate they all were. She herself looked grave and her cheeks were flushed, but she did not seem unhappy. Far from it. "Anne is all right, I guess," she said. "I have come to get a few things for her, if Tante will let her stay another night with us?"

"Of course!" Tante nodded.

"Uncle took her out for a long sail this morning," Nelly explained. "He said the sea would do her good, and calm her down."

"Has he explained things to her?" asked Tante, looking earnestly at Nelly.

"I think so," said Nelly. "I think he has

told her *everything*. But of course I haven't talked to her, yet. Only Uncle seems to know just what to say."

"Of course," said Tante, again.

"At first she cried," said Nelly, "when she came from the fire. I thought she would make herself ill. But since the sail she has cheered up. She—she smiled at me!" Nelly was too shy to tell that Anne had kissed her.

She said that Anne was having a nap now, to make up for the lost hours of the night before. Nancy asked if they had found out who set the fire, and Nelly said that they suspected the Indian woman. Cap'n Sackett had caught her wandering about the place while the fire was going on. And some boys had found her canoe beached below Idlewild, but quite empty. Somebody had got into Mr. Poole's cellar, where there was a store of liquor. She was held in arrest on suspicion, Nelly said; but that was not so uncomfortable as it sounded.

"I don't believe Sal Seguin set the fire. Never in the world!" cried Beverly, cham-

pioning her dusky friend. "Why should she do it?"

"She hated the white men," said Norma, "I remember that."

"She tried to tell something," said Nelly, "but she gets so excited nobody can understand her gibberish. She keeps saying 'No, no, no!' when anybody asks her questions. But she glowered and grumbled when she caught sight of Anne last night. That looks suspicious, doesn't it?"

"Too suspicious," declared Beverly. "Sal wouldn't give herself away like that, if she had really set the fire. She is not so foolish. She had a grudge against Anne for something Anne said when she first came down here. But Sal wouldn't burn Idlewild for that! I don't believe any woman did it," said Beverly, loyally.

"But what was she doing there in the middle of the night?" asked Nancy. "You know we saw her once prowling around at midnight, and several times since then the boys have spied her near Idlewild."

"I am going to find out, if I can," said Beverly. "I'll go to see her."

"Come back with me," suggested Nelly.

"All right," said Beverly, "but I won't bother Anne."

Beverly found Sal Seguin squatting on the floor of Cap'n Sackett's barn. The Captain himself sat in the doorway, whittling gravely, apparently acting as guard of the prisoner, while the door remained open. "I thought the poor thing would be more comfortable here than in the lockup at the Harbor," he explained. "Seems hard to shut up an Injun that's had the run of the woods; even if she may be a fire-bug," he looked at her doubtfully. "I can't see what she done it for," he said. "She hadn't any spite against Poole, like the rest of 'em. She hadn't any money to get away. If she had, maybe he'd a tried to get that too!" He whittled angrily. "She might have been after the liquor, of course. But she hadn't been drinkin'."

Sal Seguin greeted Beverly with a grunt that might mean pleasure or the opposite, and immediately began to gesticulate and to jab-

ber, as Nelly had said. "She is trying to tell me that she didn't do it," said Beverly. But Cap'n Sackett could make as good a guess as that. "I can't understand half her words," said Beverly, listening patiently to the queer mixture of syllables, part English and part of at least one other tongue. "But I do seem to gather what she means, in a way. Isn't it queer? I suppose it's because I had an Indian ancestor once." But it was more likely that she understood because she was so eager to help. There is nothing that quickens understanding so much as sympathy; as anyone knows who has had a pet animal that other persons call "dumb."

"Not set fire! No! No! No!" cried the old woman.

"Anybody can understand that, whether it's true or not," said Cap'n Sackett. "But what else, eh? What was she doin' up at Idlewild? That's what I want to know."

The squaw made strange motions with her hands, up and down, mumbling as she did so, words of which Beverly finally made out the meaning. "Oh, I see!" she cried. "She is try-

ing to say that she was cutting something—with a knife—oh yes, in the garden."

"Ugh!" grunted the squaw, satisfied at last and nodding her head violently. "Garden, ugh!"

"But there's nothin' in the garden," said the Captain incredulously. "It's all dried up, except Anne's flower-bed. She can't pretend she came to get vegetables. And I guess she didn't want Anne's flowers, did she?" He grinned at the joke.

The old squaw listened, with sharp little eyes first on Beverly's then on the old man's face. "Ugh, no!" she grunted with a frown. "Not flowers; good-smell-things; make sick folks well; medicine-plants." She fumbled in her pocket and finally drew out a few stalks of withered herbs, which she held to Beverly's nose.

"Why, it's sage," said the girl, "or marjoram; I can't quite tell which."

"Yes, yes!" grunted the Indian eagerly. "Make medicine, take home to sick Indians." An idea came into the Captain's head. "Wall, I vum!" he exclaimed. "She was after the



why-its-sage-



yarbs out of Anne's little yarb garden. Ask if that's what she's been comin' for right along?" The old woman seemed to understand him, and began nodding assent. "Come two-three-four times, up there. Bad man's house; nobody home. Medicine plants grow all alone. No white man want 'em. Me pick for sick Indian. Not thief, me!" She drew herself up proudly.

"That's what I said," Beverly nodded at her, smiling. "I was sure you were n't doing anything really wrong." But the Captain still seemed unsatisfied.

"All very well," he said, "if that's all. But she must have been there just at the time the fire started. Didn't she see anybody? Can't she tell anything? What about the cellar?"

"Me see! Me tell!" grunted Sal. "Not set fire. No! No! No!"

"No," Beverly soothed her. "I understand. But what did you see, Sal? Tell me. Was somebody setting a fire?"

"Ugh!" grunted Sal. "Two men." And she made the sign of measuring someone tall and someone short. "Big man, so! Little

man, so! Bad men burn up bad man's house. Bring out jugs," she made the sign of drinking. "Run away when see me."

This was all Beverly could get out of her. But it was enough to set them thinking. "I wish I had understood this before!" cried the Captain jumping to his feet. "We must look into this! I wonder where the men went to?"

It needed Anne or Dick to give the final clue. And even while they talked Anne appeared in the doorway of the barn, a little pale, but quite herself. It was the frowning look on the old squaw's face that caused the others to turn and see Anne there.

Beverly jumped to her feet and ran forward. "Oh Anne!" she cried. She had promised Tante not to bother Anne. But when she spied her tent-mate standing there, she couldn't help giving her a big affectionate hug. Tears came into Anne's eyes. So one of her friends at least did not despise her for being the daughter of a thief! She put her arm through Beverly's and stood facing the Captain. "I think I know who did it!" she

cried. "It wasn't she, it was the two moonshiners."

"Moonshiners!" The Captain stared. "What do you mean, Anne? What do you know about moonshiners?"

"I haven't had time to tell you yet," said Anne. "They have a camp on the mountain, and a cave on the shore, not far away. Ask Dick. We saw them. 'P. Leveen' is one, and F—Mr. Poole writes to him. They must have had the key of the cellar; for they had been taking back their jugs and things."

"Ugh," grunted Sal Seguin. "So!"

"I think they burned up Idlewild to punish me for telling," Anne went on. "They will probably do worse now. But I am not afraid any more," she smiled at the Captain, "now you know all about it!"

Here Aunt Polly appeared and led Anne back to her room. "You got to rest," she warned, with a nod to the Captain.

"Ask Dick. He can tell you all about it," said Anne over her shoulder as she was led away.

"Well!" said the Captain. "It's a queer

story, if it's true. Maybe Anne ain't quite herself and imagines it all. I must find Dick. Then, if it's so, I must get two or three men and we will go after those moonshiners. *P. Leveen*; I don't know that name."

## CHAPTER XX

### LAW AND LIBERTY

THE first thing Captain Sackett did was to look up Dick Reed, who corroborated Anne's story, and added some important details which she had forgotten. "You come along with me," said the Captain, "and we'll catch those moonshiners redhanded, I guess." The Captain also took Hugh and Victor, saying it would do no harm to have two young soldiers along, in case of accident. Besides the boys, he picked up two of his neighbors, big Bill Chatto the butcher and Lonny Maguire.

Dick was a proud boy that day, to be guide of such a party of veterans, about to show them something which he had discovered by himself; though he did not fail to give Anne credit for the original suggestion.

Captain Sackett's motor boat already trailed

a dory to be used for landing. But at Dick's suggestion they carried also his canoe, he explaining that with it they could make a swift and silent entrance to that mysterious cove where the moonshiners carried on their lawless business. When the party had almost reached the cove they anchored the motor boat, and divided their forces. Dick took Captain Sackett and Hugh into the canoe, the others following more leisurely in the dory. Swiftly and quietly Dick traced the way between the reefs that concealed the entrance, enjoying the Captain's amazement that this hiding-place had escaped his notice all these years. He had passed the shore a thousand times on his fishing trips. But only when you approached it in the right way, close up under the rocks, could you spy the cove, open and deep, penetrating the side of the mountain as if a giant had split it with his sword.

The beach was deserted. It was high tide, and the entrance to the cave was lapped by the waves. Some barrels and broken boxes were piled up just above the tide line, perhaps waiting to be shipped. Presently Hugh's

sharp eyes spied a boat moored in the shadow of some spruces close to the shore where the water was deep.

"The men are up in the hut, I guess!" whispered Dick. "We've got 'em!" It was a thrilling moment for him. The others seemed excited too, especially Bill Chatto, who turned purple in the face. Very quietly they all landed and drew up the boats on the sand. They made sure that the cave was empty, then in single file they entered the path which Dick showed them, creeping like cats so as not to make the least noise. Captain Sackett led the way, carrying his rifle ready. Hugh and Victor followed with their revolvers. The others armed with axes and carrying ropes brought up the rear.

Presently they came in sight of the hut. But before they spied the curl of smoke coming from the chimney they knew they were not alone in these woods. The hut was occupied. The sound of rough men's voices quarreling came to them down the path. They lay low in the bushes, listening, while the shouts rose higher and higher. Evidently the men were

quite off their guard, so secure were they in this lonely spot. The visitors could see the open door of the hut, and presently out of this door a man came staggering, with a small keg in his hands. He had evidently been drinking. He was coming down the path straight towards where the officer of the law and his party were concealed.

"I know him! Wait till he gets close," the Captain whispered to the others. "When I give the signal you two lads and I will trip this one up and make a rush on the hut; then you fellers with the ropes can tackle him."

And that was what happened. "*Now!*" the Captain whispered, when the tall stranger was only a few feet away. The dazed man was so surprised at the sudden onrush that he staggered and stumbled straight into the arms of the waiting fishermen, whose task was thus made easy. The Captain and the two war-veterans kept on to the hut and burst in at the open door. Everything inside was in great confusion. Bottles, kegs and jugs were overturned and dripping. Broken glass littered the floor. A second man was sitting at the table drinking

out of a bottle and banging the boards with his fist, when the party rushed upon him. Before he had a chance to seize a rifle from the wall they had his arms bound. And presently the two men were sitting handcuffed and helpless but roaring at one another outside their hut, guarded by the fishermen, while Captain Sackett, Dick and the two ex-soldiers searched the cabin.

They found it to be, as they had expected from Dick's description, a moonshiners' den, full of contraband liquor. Here were all the tools of that forbidden business. Evidently for years the pair had been distilling the dangerous stuff which the law has declared unlawful to make or sell or distribute. These men were now not only killing themselves by slow degrees, but they were breaking the law and making money by selling danger to others. Captain Sackett gazed around in surprise and horror. To think this still should have been operating under his very nose all this time, only discovered by accident through Anne's being lost on the mountain! She had been in

danger, too, that made him shudder. For these were desperate men.

Piled in one corner were some sticks of dynamite. And with these were some of the jugs still labeled with the name of *C. F. Poole*. Evidently the moonshiners had been doing a regular business with the rich man, supplying his cellars with the liquor. And when they burned his place they could not bear to see the stuff which he had left behind wasted; so they had lugged some of it back here through the woods, to enjoy by themselves, while the house was crumbling.

The Captain strode out of the house and faced the two bewildered and cowering fellows. "What d'ye burn down his house for?" he asked with a menacing frown. "We know you done it. Now what for?"

Leveen, the smaller of the two men, began to jabber in broken English, pointing at his comrade with accusing finger. "He done it. He! He! Not me!" Leveen seemed to be a foreigner of the lowest type, lawless and uneducated. Though he had come to America, it was not to be an American. He was what

Tante would have called poor material for the Patchwork Quilt; he never should have been allowed to baste himself upon it. He was that impossible kind of "square" that does not fit into any orderly society, because of its worn-off corners. He refused to acknowledge any right or wrong but "liberty" to do as he pleased.

The other man was different. He called himself Smith—an innocent name enough. "You Smith!" growled the Captain. "What *you* do it for? You know better! You was born an American; you've had an eddication and a chance. What you burn down a man's house for?"

Smith was too intoxicated to be cautious. "What did Poole cheat me fur?" he growled. "He done us both; we both paid him off! Leveen, he's lying. It was he—he lifted the petrol. Poole wanted to git rich quick. So did we. He got us to make liquor for him—ain't it a free country?—and fixed it easy so's we shouldn't be found out. He helped our business and got the advantage of it in two ways. He took our money and invested it in

his bank. Invested! He stole it, the mean scalawag! That's why we burned his house. But what I want to know is, how did you find this place? He eyed the group angrily and his eyes rested on the three khaki-clad fellows from Round Robin, with a dawning idea in his muddled brain.

"Your still was found by accident," said the Captain cautiously. "But you were seen prowlin' about Idlewild at the fire. You can't get around that."

"Injun woman!" hissed Leveen fiercely. "She saw. I told you!"

"Shut up!" cried Smith, turning on him. "You're givin' us away!" He did not seem to know that he himself had already done so. "I know who told on me," he went on fiercely. "It was that gal! You fellers are from that imitation camp, too. She told on me, though I warned her. She is Poole's darter—I might a'knowned she'd queer my game. She's a chip of the old block, she is. But she'll have to pay yet!" And he uttered wild threats about Anne.

The Captain grew rigid. "Stop!" he cried

sternly. "That little gal is no more Poole's darter than I be. She is my grand-darter, and be careful how you talk now. Every word you say will be used against you."

It is hard to say who stared most at these words; the prisoners, or the three from Round Robin, or the fishermen. But they effectually closed the foul mouths of Smith and his partner. Not another word did they speak till they were landed in the lock-up of Old Harbor; a place seldom occupied in this God-fearing, law-abiding community, where it was the fashion to respect the comfort of one's neighbors as well as of one's self, in the true American way.

The boys returned to Round Robin with an exciting story and a tremendous bit of news. Indeed, Round Robin found the news more exciting even than the story of the capture—moonshiners and firebugs and all.

"Did you know who Anne was all the time, Tante?" asked Dick; and they all looked at her eagerly.

"Not at first," said Tante. "Mr. Poole wrote me early in the summer. I suspected

he was in trouble when he said I should have to tell Anne something unpleasant before long. Then the Captain told me. It was better that her own grandfather should tell Anne about it all; that fine old man!"

"Then Anne never was a Golden Girl, after all," said Eddie, who had overheard and half understood what was being said. "Nor even gilded," added Freddie.

"Hush! she may be gold inside," said Nancy, thinking of an ending for her fairy story.

"I wish I had known this before I wrote Mother," Beverly mused as she walked away. "I'll have to add a codicil."

"I've already telegraphed Father," Norma whispered to Gilda in their tent. Girls do like to tell news!

## CHAPTER XXI

### COUSINS

THE story which the Captain had told Anne, when they went for that memorable sail together, was this.

Fifteen years earlier his beloved daughter Anna had married a man from "the Main," as the people of that part of the country called the mainland. To her parents' grief he had taken her to live fifty miles away. How they had missed her! A year later she came home for a visit, bringing her little baby, called Anne—"and that was *you*," the Captain said, "the cutest little baby I ever saw!"

Just before it was time for Anna to go back home, her husband came for her and they went on an automobile trip with some friends. The party had a terrible accident, and the young couple were killed. Their little baby

remained for a few months with its grandparents, who grew to love it dearly. But the very next spring Captain Sackett's own wife died. With all these griefs the Captain was nearly distracted. He was quite unfit to care for the little baby alone, and there was no one to help him. His one hope of recovering a quiet mind lay in a long ocean voyage. But what was to become of the little orphan?

Just before this time Mr. Poole came to the Harbor, and began buying land and cutting a wide swath. He seemed kind and generous —that was because he wanted to win the confidence of the people in that place. Many persons gave him their money to keep. The Captain did not do that; but he did more. He gave him little Anne. The rich man's wife had taken a fancy to the helpless little one, and as she had no children of her own wanted to adopt Anne. Mr. Poole was willing, and it seemed a lucky chance for the baby to be brought up in comfort and happiness. No one was ever to know Anne's history. The only condition the Captain made was that the little girl should always be allowed to come

to see him when she was at the Harbor, and that she should call him "Uncle."

"I thought I was doin' ye a good turn, Anne," the Captain added wistfully. "I thought he was a good man, and you were lucky. But I made a big mistake. He was always selfish. And after his first wife died he grew more so. You'd a' been better off with me, I guess, even if I'd a' taken ye with me to sea."

The Captain told Anne how Mr. Poole had written him early in the summer that a crash was coming shortly, and that Anne must be told the whole truth sooner or later. Poole could no longer take care of her, for he was penniless and worse. Anyway, his wife would have all she could do to care for their own baby, born this very year of disaster. This boy of course made all the difference. There was no longer any place for Anne who, it now seemed, had never been properly adopted. He wanted to give her up. He had arranged for her summer at Mrs. Batchelder's camp. After that he shifted the responsibility back to the Captain. The old man paused here.

All this had been about the past. Nothing was said about the future.

At first Anne was only dazed by this toppling of her whole family and home. But gradually one thought came uppermost. She asked only one question, "I am glad I am not the daughter of a thief!" she said tremulously. "Oh, I am glad! But if Mr. Poole isn't—who was my truly father?"

The Captain brightened. "He was all right," he answered. "At first I didn't like Anna to marry him, because he was a foreigner. But he was an honest man, a sailor named Carlsen, a Norwegian."

"A Norwegian!" Anne stared. The Captain went on.

"You ought to love the sea, Anne. Your father came from 'way up in the Northern ocean, a regular sailor, like me. He was thrifty and doing well. He had laid by a little. But of course Poole got that. Lucky he didn't get my savings, by gum! I'm not rich, but I've got enough, Anne—" he broke off abruptly. He seemed to want to say more, but perhaps he did not dare.

Anne Carlsen; that was her new name! She rather liked the sound of it. She had never cared for the jerky syllables "Anne Poole." Her father had been a foreigner it seemed; and she had despised and laughed at those other foreigners! And she had not a penny in the world; no home; nobody who seemed to want her. But at any rate she was the daughter of honest people and her grandfather was the best man who ever lived! There was nothing for her to be ashamed of but the foolish ideas she had had in the past.

This was what Anne was thinking this morning as she moved about the pretty little room in Cap'n Sackett's house, next to Nelly's, where she had spent two days and nights as a guest. She was setting the room to rights and packing her little bag to go back to Camp. The Captain had said that was what she was to do at present; there were still two weeks before the Camp would break up, when Round Robin would go back to the city and school. Anne was still in Tante's care, and Tante was expecting her, he said.

Anne finished her little chores—they

seemed very easy nowadays—and stood looking out of the window through the branches of the old apple tree at the bay. It was a sweet little view. Anne thought she had never seen a prettier one anywhere; the green grass above the quiet beach, the sparkling sea beyond the evergreen trees making a border. This was the view which her little mother had loved, too. In that very room she had sung Anne to sleep, a tiny baby. And that blue vastness was the ocean which all her Yankee ancestors had loved; so too had her Norse father, of a race of famous sailor-men. Anne remembered it was the Norse sailors who had really first discovered America.

Little white waves were breaking up on the beach where Cap'n Sackett was just landing from his boat with a basket of fish. He had been out since four o'clock that morning. How hard he worked; and how everybody respected him! It was fine to be honored by your neighbors.

Someone tapped on the door and Nelly entered. "Hello," she said. "Can I help? Oh, you're all ready. Anne! I'm sorry you are

going away! I wish you were going to stay—always!" Nelly stammered at the last word.

"It's funny, but it seems like home," said Anne simply. She felt suddenly lonely at the thought of going away from this nest into which she had fluttered almost by accident; before she knew it had been builded by her own flock of sea-birds, and that she herself had once been sung asleep in its safety. "How long have you *known*, Nelly?"

Anne had no need to explain what she meant. Nelly knew she was thinking of her name and history.

"I think I have always guessed it," said Nelly, "ever since I first saw you on the pier, the day you landed. I felt as if we were *something together*. I can't explain what I mean. No, you didn't feel so, I know; it didn't seem possible, then. No person told me till Uncle Eph did the other day. I just *intued* it!" She looked shyly at Anne.

"You must have hated me," said Anne, remembering the disagreeable airs she had put on and the way she had snubbed Nelly Sackett.

Nelly considered her cousin gravely. "No," she said, "I didn't hate you. I thought maybe that was the way I'd feel if I were in your place. Money often does turn people's heads, doesn't it? We aren't a bit alike, really. But I guess there is something alike inside us. There must be inside everybody."

Anne had been thinking of something else that troubled her. "What do you suppose will become of me?" she faltered. "I never thought about planning things till now. Nobody wants me, Nelly. Mr. Poole just gives me up—though I can't be sorry for *that!* If anybody wants to adopt me, all right, he says. But why should anybody want to? I'm no good. I'm just expensive."

Nelly began to laugh, recalling how well Anne had fitted into their simple domestic life during the past two days; how many kinds of things she had learned to do in this queer summer; and how everybody was growing to like her. "Golden Girls sound expensive," she said, "but maybe they are not so bad, when you know them." Anne did not laugh at the old joke.

"Suppose nobody wants me?" she said. "What happens to people like that? Do they go to the poorhouse? If I could be earning my own living it would be different. But how can I, now? I don't know enough."

Nelly shook her head. "Not yet," she said. "We are not old enough." She had been thinking about these things too. "But don't forget that Uncle Eph is your grandfather. You've got somebody behind you, anyway. That's more than a good many children have."

"He didn't say he could help," murmured Anne. "He didn't offer."

"He was afraid of you," said Nelly eagerly. "I know how it is. He thought he would seem too *plain* for you. He thought it was too sudden to come down from the idea of Idlewild to this house! But he wants you, I know, if you'd be happy. He said so. He thinks maybe you can do better. But he would take care of you, just as he takes care of me. We'd divide everything. We'd be like sisters, Anne. I'd let you share my mother!"

Anne turned from the window and looked

at Nelly with new eyes. What a wonderful thing it would be to have a sister! Since living at camp she had begun to realize how nice it was to be close to other girls and do things together with them. She and Nelly really were cousins, that was certain. And how different Nelly seemed to her now that she knew her better. How unselfish she was!

"We'll be like sisters anyway," she said impulsively, "but the Captain—Grandfather—couldn't support another big girl like me?"

"He isn't poor," said Nelly. "We can both learn to do something. Then some day we can both pay him back. What will you be, Anne?"

Anne had never really thought of *being* anything until this moment. "Be? Why—I'd like to be a teacher," she said suddenly. The idea popped into her head like an inspiration. "I'd like to teach foreigners how to become good 'squares' in the Patchwork Quilt, as Tante calls it. Oh yes! And I'd like to learn how to take care of little children like the children around here. I'd like to be able to nurse them or doctor them when they

can't get a doctor in a hurry. I wish I could make up to this place for the things I had when I was little, when I didn't know who was paying for them. I didn't know it, but I was a *Pig!*"

Nelly listened eagerly. "I think it's a lovely idea," she said, hugging Anne around the neck. "You can't be everything; but you are awfully clever—much smarter than I. I want to be a teacher, too. But you can do a lot beside. Some day you will be my boss, I know; and you will like it, too." Nelly understood her cousin pretty well already.

"Hello, Anne!" called the Captain from the foot of the stairs. "Ain't ye most ready to go? They're expectin' ye, I guess." Anne turned red. He seemed anxious to be rid of her, she thought. But when she saw his kind face she knew better. "I'm going to tell Uncle Eph what you said you wanted to be," Nelly whispered, and she burst out with the whole story before Anne could stop her. The Captain listened gravely, with his eyes resting affectionately on Anne, but all he said was—"That's good!"

"Thank you for being so kind to me, and for telling me all about myself so nicely," said Anne a little stiffly. "I have had a very nice time here, and—I'm glad you are my Grand-father!" The Captain beamed.

"I'm glad ye're not ashamed," he said. "Now ye'll run over to see us often, won't ye? It ain't long before Mrs. Batchelder breaks up camp, ye know, and then—" he waited, "we dunno *what*."

"Of course I'll come," said Anne. "This seems like home, now."

"Does it?" the Captain's face brightened. "Wal, I wish it was, truly. Of course it can be, Anne, if ye want it. It's plain. But the door's open. No, don't say anything now. Maybe ye'll have a better chance. But anyhow, here is my little Anna's place ready for ye. I'll send ye to school. I can help ye do whatever ye want to, I guess. Life won't be so easy for ye, as it used to be. But it needn't be empty. I don't want to press ye, I give ye up once, and I guess that cost me the right to ye now. I thought I was doin' the best thing for ye then. But I made a

mistake. Now maybe ye'll know what's best for yourself, if you have a chance. Anyway —no hurry!

"Oh Grandfather!" Anne ran up and hugged the old man around the neck, till the tears came into his eyes. "How good you are! I'd choose this home *anyway!*"

But the Captain gently shook his head. "There, there!" he said, "Don't ye go too fast, little gal. I don't want to take advantage of ye. Wait till ye get your bearin's. It's all so sudden for ye. I wanted ye to see this house and the way we live, so's you'd know what ye was doin' ef ye chose us. But take time. Finish out yer summer at the Camp, and see what happens. Then we can talk it over again. Run along now. They'll be expectin' ye."

Aunt Polly added no word to the Captain's invitation, but kissed Anne affectionately and said good-bye.

"Oh, I am so glad somebody wants me!" thought Anne, as she and Nelly walked slowly along the road together, talking of many things.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK

THE summer was drawing to a close. There were only two weeks more of Camp, and Round Robin was resolved to make the most of this fortnight, before the little group should scatter to the four quarters of the land. For as Dick said it was like "boxing the compass" when they compared their winter plans. Dick was putting in long hours finishing up his studies with Hugh, before starting back to his home in the far West. Beverly, like the summer birds which were already showing restless flutterings in the tree-tops, would soon be flitting South. Victor was going to try his fortunes in New York, where Norma lived. Gilda and the Batchelders were due in Boston, where the public schools open early. And Cicely must sail back to England before the autumn storms were due.

Nelly Sackett was still in High School at Old Harbor; she alone would remain, it seemed. Then there was Anne. What about Anne?

Round Robin was agreed that they must all treat Anne exactly as if nothing had happened. Anne was still Anne, and they had voted her a full and satisfactory member. The thing was to have as good a time and to make her have as good a time as possible in the short weeks left of the precious summer. There weren't likely to be any more such exciting happenings as had kept them all on tenterhooks during these last days. But there were picnics and excursions planned; the hours were not long enough for all the delightful things they had put off till the end of summer, while the days were already growing shorter.

The morning Anne was expected back to camp Tante sent the Twins off to pick blueberries. Cicely and Nancy had already started with baskets for a "mushroam," as they called a tramp to find the delicious tawny chanterelles that hid in the shadows under the spruce trees. Dick was studying in his tent; some of the others had gone for the mail.

Beverly announced that she was going to see Sal Seguin. The old Indian woman was free again, but Captain Sackett had let her live in his barn for a day or two, while she was being questioned about what she had seen that night when Idlewild was burned. Beverly wanted to give her a little present before she went home, for she and the old woman had become very good friends. Tante was left alone at Round Robin to welcome Anne; which was exactly what she had planned. She did not know that at this very moment Norma was racing breathless along the road, hoping to intercept Anne at the end of Cap'n Sackett's lane.

"Heia! Hoia!" sang Norma in her musical soprano as she spied the two girls coming towards her, and in her dramatic Italian way she flourished a paper high in the air. Anne and Nelly, who were talking earnestly together, stopped their conversation and came up to her with a question. It did not seem as if there could be any event left to cause such excitement.

"Good news!" called Norma, her big eyes

shining. And running forward she seized Anne in her arms and kissed her warmly. "I have had an answer to my telegram. I thought it would come this morning." The girls still stared. They did not know about any telegram. But Norma explained that it was from her father in New York. "Let me read it," she said unfolding the paper. "I ran all the way from the Post Office because I couldn't wait, Anne."

The telegram was, after its kind, brief and emphatic. "'Wire needs of your girl friend. How much? Tell her bank on me. G. Sonnino.'—There!" said Norma triumphantly. "That's just like Father! Now it's all right."

But Anne looked puzzled. "What do you mean?" she said. "I don't understand."

"It means that as soon as Father heard about—about your trouble, Anne, he just wanted to help. You can count on him for money enough to do whatever you please—for a while, anyway. Father will do anything for me, Anne. I am so glad!"

"Oh Norma!" exclaimed Nelly, glancing sidewise at Anne. She was afraid the impul-

sive girl would hurt her cousin's feelings. Anne flushed a little and hesitated.

"It is awfully good of you Norma, and your Father is kind as can be," she said. "But—but I hope I shall not have to borrow any money from—from outside my family. I have a family, you know, Norma! Nelly is my cousin and Cap'n Sackett is my grandfather. I don't think he would want me to take money from anyone else. Would he Nelly?"

Nelly shook her head. "I don't think so," she said emphatically. Norma's face fell.

"I am so disappointed," she said. But she was wise enough not to press the point. "Well, I suppose I may as well wire Father now," she said, turning reluctantly back towards the village. "He will be sorry. He loves to help."

Here and there along the road a maple leaf turning red showed that the short summer was nearing its end. Blackberries were ripening above the stone walls. The birds were flitting in little groups through the treetops, keeping together, ready for their coming long

flight. The golden rod stood suddenly ablaze, and the asters were putting on their royal purple.

"What a lovely road it is!" said Anne. "I never used to notice such things, but I have got new eyes this summer."

They were about half way to Round Robin before they met Beverly. "Oh Anne!" she cried running up as soon as she saw the two cousins. "I *am* so glad to see you again. I have missed you awfully. I'm on my way to see old Sal. But I'll be back before luncheon. Let's go for a swim as soon as I get back, shall we?"

"All right," agreed Anne, glad to be off-handed.

Beverly turned on her heel as she was just disappearing down the path, "I say, Anne," she drawled, "don't you make any engagements for October! I've written Mother already that you are to come and visit us in Virginia for at least a month. We'll have the best time! Everybody will want you; but don't forget I've asked you first." Anne

beamed upon her with pleasure. Beverly was such a dear!

"I'd love to come, if I can," she said. "But I'll have to ask Grandfather, of course. And I don't know about school yet."

"We'll fix it somehow," Beverly nodded. "Mother will be crazy to see you. And you'll love Liveoaks, our old place. Well, so-long! I'll have to hurry if we are to get that swim." And Beverly moved on, as fast as Beverly could.

"How dear they are!" thought Anne. "I never would have believed it, six weeks ago!"

Meanwhile, with Patsy in her lap, Tante sat on the piazza of the bungalow watching for Anne. As she darned the stockings of the Twins she glanced up every now and then anxiously. Anne was late. All these meetings and talks had delayed her and Nelly. When at last Tante saw the two girls coming along the path she laid down her mending and went to greet them with a sweet smile. "I am glad to see you back, Anne my dear!" she said, cordially. And Patsy arching his back seemed to agree with her, in an amiable

purr. "These two days have seemed long to us."

Nelly lingered at the foot of the steps. She hated to give up this new-found cousin of hers. "I guess I will go back now," she said, reluctantly. "Will you come over to-morrow, Anne?"

"Of course I will," said Anne heartily. "Don't feed the rabbit till I come. I want him to be glad to see me."

"You don't need to worry. We shall all be glad enough," grinned Nelly. Anne waved her out of sight. Then she sat down on the piazza steps at Tante's feet. It seemed as if she had been gone a week. But Tante acted exactly as if nothing had happened. Tante always treated everybody the same at one time as at another; which was one reason why everybody loved her so much. She told Anne some of the things the Club had planned for the next two weeks. Then she said quite casually that of course the Camp would be closed in September, and not opened till another summer.

"Another summer!" said Anne. "I suppose

I shan't see any of you till then. Won't it be odd?" Tante asked her if she had any plan for the winter, and Anne hesitated. "Not any regular plan," she asked. "You know everything about me, don't you, Tante?" Tante said yes, she did.

"I have a foreign name now!" said Anne. "Isn't it queer? I can't quite get used to being *Anne Carlsen*," she spoke it strangely. Tante asked her if she liked her new name, and Anne confessed that it sounded better to her than the old one. Then Tante said a strange thing:

"Because, if you don't like it we can change it. How would you like the name of Batchelder, for instance? How would you like to call Nancy your sister, and Hugh and the Twins your brothers, Anne?"

"Tante!" Anne gasped. What was she being offered? Nothing less than a new home and family. She had seen enough of that family to guess what a beautiful home they must have. Seeing Anne speechless, Tante went on to tell her how she had consulted her children and how they were pleased with the

idea. They were not rich, she said. They lived in a simple city house, not in the least like the former luxurious home of Mr. Poole. They had no servants, and they all shared the work together, just as at Round Robin. Tante was a teacher, and so was Hugh. They would all have to earn their living some day. But, Tante said, all American children ought to be able to do that, whatever the future held in store for them. Anne should go to school with Nancy and learn the things she wished. Then in summer there would again be Camp, which was Tante's "business."

"You will be treated just the same as one of my own children, Anne," said Tante. And Anne knew that Tante never said what she did not mean.

"Oh Tante! And you have such a big family already!"

"We have a big house," smiled Tante. "We love to keep it filled." Anne seemed to feel the warmth of happiness that must brim the rooms in Tante's big house, radiating from Tante's own big heart. Then suddenly she had a vision of the Captain's happy look when

she had first called him "Grandfather," and of Nelly's wistful good-bye. And she had a curious counter-pulling of her heart towards those people who really belonged to her.

"Does Grandfather know?" she said falteringly. Tante nodded.

"Certainly, I consulted him first," she said. "He is willing you should choose for yourself, between his home and mine. Of course, you would still see him in the summer; but I should want to adopt you legally and have you take our name."

Anne Carlsen stood looking at the ground, thinking harder than she had ever thought in her life before. What Tante had said made her very happy. To think that these lovely people wanted her in their family! And wanted to share with her their good old Yankee name! She was not yet quite familiar with her own proper Norwegian name; why should she mind giving it up so soon? And yet—strangely enough—Anne did not want to give it up!

"My *real* name is Carlsen," she was saying to herself. "I never thought about

what a real name meant, before. This one sounds foreign, but it is *mine*; given me by my good sailor father whom I never knew. I lost it once without knowing; now I have got it back again. And I'd like to keep it and make it real American. It is only a *sound*; that is all the Batchelder name is, too. But it's *mine*. And I can only be myself, not a Batchelder." She looked up at Tante with a wrinkle in her forehead, because she had been thinking so hard.

"You don't have to tell me right away, Anne," said Tante kindly. "Think it over, Dear." But Anne shook her head.

"Oh, Tante, you dear Tante!" she replied in a low voice. "I love you all for inviting me. But if Grandfather wants me—and I think he does, Nelly says so—I want to be his girl. I want to make good with my own name, too. I think Grandfather would like that; because of my mother."

Tante kissed her affectionately. "You are a dear little girl!" she said. "And you have thought things out pretty clearly, I see, in this

short time. But you mustn't be in a hurry. Take time before you decide, Anne."

"That is what Grandfather said. But I have decided already," said Anne firmly. "I know I am doing right. If Grandfather wants me, I am going to stay with him and Nelly. I shall do as he says, about school and everything." And she told Tante what she hoped to be; when she should grow old enough to help in the world.

"I think you have chosen right," said Tante. "But the children will be disappointed. Your Grandfather and I shall have to do some planning together."

"Oh Tante! It is so nice to be *wanted!*" said Anne fervently.

Then the Twins came racing up. "Hooray, Anne!" cried Freddie. "Come and play Indian with us, will you?"

"Come and see how we've finished the house you began for us, Anne," said Eddie pulling her by the hand. "It is so nice to have you back!"

"I'm coming," said Anne. "And here's Doughboy, too! But you just ought to see

my rabbits, Twins. Will you go over with me to Grandfather's house to-morrow and see Plon and the others? That will be fun!"

Tante watched them racing down the path towards the sea; then went out to meet Nancy who was just returning from a visit to the Maguire children.

"Anne has decided to remain Anne Carlson," she said briefly. "I thought she would."

"Well, I didn't," confessed Nancy. "I thought she'd jump at our family, Mother! The Golden Girl was just lonesome all the time, when we thought her disagreeable. I didn't half understand her."

"If you are going to write stories—or do anything else successfully, for that matter—you will have to learn to understand people," said Tante smiling. "It is a great part of Imagination. Fairy Stories are only another small part, Nancy."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### A BEGINNING

ONE beautiful blue day early in September, several persons stood on the pier at Old Harbor watching the little steamer move away. It was bearing the larger part of the summer colony back to their winter homes, leaving but a few to wave them a good-bye. But this was not a sad occasion, not the regretful ending of anything. Instead it was but the happy beginning of something still better; which is what all so-called "endings" ought to be.

Nelly Sackett and Anne Carlsen stood on the pier close together, waving their handkerchiefs to the group gathered on the upper deck of the boat, where Anne had stood alone that June day weeks ago, so helpless and unhappy. Down below, Cap'n Sackett in his

dory was waiting to row the two girls back to the Cove and Aunt Polly.

For this is what Tante and the Captain had agreed between them, after a long consultation and much thinking. Nelly and Anne were both to spend the winter in the city, where they could go to school with Nancy and plan the next step in the work each most wanted to do. They were to live in the big Batchelder home, almost as if they were a part of that hospitable family.

And already Round Robin had planned a grand reunion for the holidays. Instead of Anne's going to visit Beverly in the south, Beverly herself had promised to come to Boston. Norma would find it very easy to come on from New York; and Victor too, for a few days at least. Gilda was already a neighbor of the Batchelders in a happy suburban home. Cicely would have to be represented by a letter from across the sea; and Dick by another from his school across the great western plains. But East, West, North, and South would be together in spirit at least on Christmas Day, looking forward to another summer.

Meanwhile, the Captain could not spare his two girls just yet, he said; even if it meant beginning school a few weeks late. This delay would give them all time to make certain readjustments and arrangements. And it would give Anne a chance to see her country home in its most beautiful days, when the leaves had turned and the grass would be rusty-brown, and the wild cranberries ripe in the high bogs along the dunes. For it is not until the summer "transients" have gone away that the wild country puts on its choicest beauty, and its gaudiest colors; when the ocean plays its grandest games for the benefit of its own people, the sea-lovers who linger beside the great deep and are loth to go away.

"I am glad I am not on that boat now!" Anne confided to Nelly's ear. "Just think how hot and stuffy it will seem in the city when they wake up to-morrow morning! But we shall still be breathing this sweet, spicy air, and looking at this blue water!"

"It's pretty here in the winter, too," said Nelly. "Sometime we must invite the Round Robin here for the holidays; some day when

you and I have made our fortunes, and have turned our old house into a wonderful steam-heated, electric-lighted, summer-and-winter home. Won't that be fun?"

"We'll do it!" cried Anne, with a firm nod of her head—like her grandfather's—that meant business.

"Heia! Hoia!" shouted the girls on the steamer, as the engine bell rang. "Good-bye, Nelly! Good-bye, Anne! See you soon! Together! Round Robin!"

"Heia! Hoia!" answered the cousins on the pier. "We'll bring you all a branch of trailing yew and a cedar tree from Round Robin when we come down."

"And a bunch of fresh catnip for Patsy, and some ripe cranberries! Together! Round Robin!"

The people lingering on the pier grinned good-naturedly at the two girls as they climbed down into the Captain's boat, when the steamer was out of sight. Whatever belonged to the Captain they accepted without question.

"Ye're havin' two little lassies now instead of the one, ain't ye, Cap'n?" chuckled Lonny

Maguire, leaning over the railing for the customary parting shots between him and his neighbor.

"Wal, I dunno!" said the Captain with a twinkle. "Accordin' to 'rithmetic, two gals for half a year ought to be about the same as one gal for a whole year. Ain't that so?" Lonny retired with a guffaw, to spread this joke abroad.

"Two girls for always, Grandfather!" Anne corrected him. "Wherever we are, even if it is far from here, it's home by the sea where you are."

"Yes," said Nelly, taking an oar and handing another to Anne, "wherever we are, we shall be in one boat, pulling *Together!*"

THE END











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